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THURSDAY, MARCH 28TH, 2013

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COWBRIDGE
SO MUCH TO SEE... Pages 20 to 23

REFRESH, RENEW, REPAIR...
Page 27

SEARCH AND RESCUE

Service is on its way to the Vale

VALE MP Alun Cairns says rescue services in south Wales will benefit from improved response times, when St Athan becomes the base for two search and rescue helicopters.

At the moment, most rescues in south Wales are the responsibility of the RAF base in Chivenor on the north coast of Devon.

St Athan's gain, therefore, will be Chivenor's loss.

Mr Cairns reveals the details of the scheme in his column in today's GEM (*see page 9*) and it has come about after the UK Government signed a contract with the American -based company, Bristow Helicopters Ltd, to provide search and rescue helicopter services in the UK.

It means that the RAF will no longer run search and rescue in the UK, and bases such as RAF Valley in Anglesey will lose the service, as it will move to Caernarfon Airport.

Bristow has won a 10-year contract, worth £1.6 billion, and will be supplying more modern helicopters than the RAF Sea King, which is close to the end of its working life.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

CHURCHES TOGETHER FOR PALM SUNDAY

ABOVE: Canon Derek Belcher and the Rev Heather Weddell led the Palm Sunday procession through the town. See page 23 for more details. Photo by Mike Wilcock.

CARDIFF AIRPORT BOUGHT BY WELSH GOVERNMENT

As The GEM went to press, it was announced that the Welsh Government had bought Cardiff Airport at a reported cost of £52 million.

The news met with a mixed reaction.

Vale AM Jane Hutt was enthusiastic, saying: "By taking the airport into public ownership, the Welsh Government can integrate it into its wider economic strategy and boost prospects for Welsh citizens, tourists, businesses and the aviation industry – particularly the British Airways Maintenance Centre."

However, the Leader of the Welsh Conservatives, Andrew RT Davies, described it as a "nationalisation" and said: "Many people will be amazed that they are able to find £52 million under the mattress, having spent two years since the start of the fourth Assembly, moaning about not having enough money from the Westminster Government."

The Welsh Government has said it will not run the airport, but will seek a commercial operator to do so.

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Jogger tried to rescue injured dog

Ceri's bravery is honoured with a memorial plaque

RIGHT: Ceri Jones with the plaque, and Jo Jo the dog.

A VALE woman has been given a commemorative plaque at the Dogs Trust in Court Colman, Bridgend, in recognition of her brave attempt to rescue a fatally injured dog.

Ceri Jones, who lives in Llangan, was out jogging in the Treoes area when she saw that the dog had wandered into a field and had been injured by a horse.

The dog's owner, Christina Davison, told The GEM: "I had taken my two dogs, Jesse and Jo Jo for a walk.

"Jesse was deaf and prone to becoming disorientated. In this case, she suddenly crossed a stream and I was unable to cross it to catch her.

"A horse was in the field and Jesse was injured by its hooves. She didn't get up."

It was at this point that Ceri Jones came upon the scene.

Christina said: "I was hysterical and told her what had happened.

"She ran across, without a thought for her own safety, and rescued Jesse.

"Sadly, Jesse was so badly injured that I had to let her go that evening. Had Ceri not been there, Jesse would have died alone in the field.

"Instead, Ceri came to Maes Glas Brackla veterinary practice with me and stayed with me while they examined Jesse.

"I can never thank her enough for her bravery and kindness in such circumstances."

Christina added: "Linda Feagan at the Dogs Trust has installed a plaque in memory of Jesse and of Ceri's bravery. "A fitting memorial."

Don't Forget
British Summer Time (BST) Starts at 2am this Sunday.
Remember to put your clocks forward one hour

Cattle are taken from two farms in Llanmaes

FOLLOWING a GEM report earlier this month concerning the welfare of cattle on two Vale farms, officers from the Vale Council took action last week.

The cows were taken from Frampton Farm and Brook Farm in Llanmaes and were loaded on articulated lorries bound for another farm in Wales.

The council operation took place in conjunction with Hillside Animal Sanctuary, based in Norfolk, which is home to 2,000 animals.

The GEM understands that some cows had to be put down.

The council's principal Trading Standards officer, Christina Roberts-Kinsey, said: "This has been a large scale investigation and operation which would not have been possible without the help of Hillside."

The investigation is ongoing and the Vale Council said it would not be making any further comment at this stage.

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'APPALLED BY CYNICISM'

I WAS appalled to read the letter in The GEM on March 21 from Coun R Bertin; it is difficult to recall anything so cynical and anti-democracy.

Let's ask a few pertinent questions:

1. How many people in Barry could name the Chief Constable?

2. How many knew of the system of governance of the local police?

I asked over 50 people and not one could answer these questions.

More pertinent questions:

1. How many people does Alun Michael represent?

While he is answering that, perhaps Coun Bertin could remind us of the turn-out at his election and the number of people who voted for him.

2. In what way exactly, do the Police Commissioners politicise the police – particularly as two of the four Welsh Police Commissioners are independent?

The most appalling part, however, was the admission that he did not try to find out about the Police Commissioner's role and, as a consequence, he could not be bothered to vote.

Isn't one of the duties of elected representatives to establish the facts?

Let us hope that none of his constituents asked for advice about the Commissioner's role.

Is it any wonder that politics and politicians at all levels are held in such low esteem?

In my view, councillors who are unprepared to undertake a little research should be stripped of their roles, and the generous payments they receive.

John A Turner
Rhoose

'PCC not just about complaints'

I READ with disappointment The GEM letter last week from Coun Bertin, regarding Mr Alun Michael, the Police 'Complaints' Commissioner and his team.

Firstly, the role is not merely about complaints, which Coun Bertin would be aware of had he bothered to take more interest in the job specification, but to ensure the policing needs of our community are met as effectively as possible and to oversee how crime is tackled in our area.

As a politician, Mr Michael has probably by now realised that he has no real idea how to fulfil his role and has, therefore, decided on a strong and competent team to show him what to do.

I cannot doubt that he has not, as suggested, created "jobs for the boys and girls" – but, as employment law requires, provided clear job specifications, advertised the posts in an open manner – for example in the local and national press – and chosen his team from a list of competent candidates.

It is simply scurrilous to imply that a person with the credentials of Mr Michael should do otherwise.

I Robinson,
Rhoose.

Remember Sully!

REGARDING the recent GEM letter from Coun Anthony Ernest, about bus stop changes, it is good that they are going to stop outside JQ for access to bus and train station for Penarth and Barry bus users.

People from Sully also use the bus. Stopping at The Philharmonic is a very long way from the main St David's Centre, and all the main shops.

Could they not give us a bus stop in Churchill Way? If you are elderly, disabled or have children, that would be far more convenient to all the shops and arcades.

Mrs Maureen Poole, Sully.

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We will (in certain circumstances) protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, Don John, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7E OR email gemeditorial@tindlenews. co.uk

'Decision-makers failing our town'

I WRITE with dismay, after reading last week's GEM story, headlined '*Barry's iconic project seems a world away*' , which describes the council's decision not to follow the Regeneration Board / LDP Collins idea of a sea life aquarium and family centre for Nell's Point.

I think it was an excellent idea and would have brought much-needed jobs , tourism and educational facilities to the area – while also solving parking issues, and the need for an all-weather attraction.

It would have been an iconic project that would have drawn people to south Wales.

Our council and others have had 15 years to decide what to put on the site – and, despite consultants' recommendations over the years from Tibbalds Colborne , Humberts Leisure, and now, Collins LDP , it seems that whatever proposals/ strategies they come up with, unless they involve housing or supermarkets, nobody in authority is able to 'take the bull by the horns' , and actually press forward with any of them.

My message for all these decision-takers who continue to fail Barry is to go and play 'Monopoly' somewhere else!

We need people who can make things happen, not just give the impression of progress. Wishful thinking, I expect.

Jonathan Osborne
(*FocusBarry supporter & Barry Island trader*).

Windy corridors of power...

IT looks as if we are going to get two new nuclear power stations at Hinckley Point, courtesy of EDF, which we know is a French company – so we will again be held to ransom for our electricity bills. ...Nothing changes there.

As they will take ten years to complete, it will not affect me, but I am concerned about my children and grandchildren and the poison legacy across the water.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Should we have wind, or nuclear power?
that seems to be the question of the hour,
Nuclear power is the ticking time bomb,
that will be a threat long after we are gone,
Tidal power is another way,
but more expensive, or so they say,
The answer could be the Welsh Assembly,
all that hot air and it's free,
Piped to a turbine in a power station,
to supply free electricity for the nation,
Or maybe eels kept in a pot,
that's bound to make the water hot,
Give everyone wind generator machines,
supplied monthly with a crate of baked beans.

Colin Dudley
Barry

Shh...be careful what you say!

IT is wonderful to know, as a lawyer, that occasionally British justice, and the courts, get it right.

We may soon be able to call a police horse '*gay*' without fear of being 'banged up'.

They DPP recently agreed that cases similar to this (later dropped) and another in which a defendant was fined for saying *'woof'* to two dogs, should no longer be pursued as criminal offences under the 1986 Public Order Act.

Hip-hip-hooray for free speech – I must remember to tell a neighbour that her cat has bestial tendencies!

Who, I wonder, took the decision to prosecute someone for barking at a dog, or saying that their police horse looked a bit *'camp'*?

It makes you wonder if saying '*how now, brown cow*' is racist... or even sexist...

Christopher Short, Barry.

Let us know your thoughts on what is going on in the Vale - contact us:
gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

Plaid and the Vale tax rise

I was interested to read of local resident Barry Shaw's disappointment with the recent setting of the Vale's Council tax rise at 4.8 per cent.

Mr Shaw's letter praised a different, slightly reduced tax rise proposed by Plaid Cymru. Could this possibly be the same Mr Shaw who as a Plaid Cymru councillor was voted out of his position, after he and his colleagues voted through several near five per cent rate rises, while in shared control of the Vale themselves a few years ago?

I would also like to place on record that I voted against any rise in the Vale Council's tax burden on residents.

Kevin Mahoney
(UKIP councillor Sully Ward)

A BITTER PILL TO SWALLOW

THE 4.8 per cent hike in the Vale of Glamorgan council tax is one of the highest above inflation increases in the UK.

Council leader Neil Moore said that the Vale was one of the lowest funded in Wales. If the council is struggling financially, then surely the message must be passed on to the Welsh Government in Cardiff Bay, who are responsible for funding local government.

Why doesn't the local AM stand up for the people of the Vale, some of whom are hard pressed to pay these increases?

This is a bitter pill to swallow when Cardiff Council have confirmed it will freeze council tax.

Name and address supplied

Recycling: well done!

MAY I, through the pages of your paper, congratulate both residents and council waste collection staff for making the Vale the second best council in south Wales for recycling.

We outperformed all our neighbouring councils with a 58 per cent recycling rate (Cardiff 52 per cent; Rhondda Cynon Taf 45 per cent; Bridgend 57 per cent).

Coun Rob Curtis
Cabinet member for the environment and visible services.

'Now look to Oak Field'

THE recent decision made by the Vale Council cabinet that Llancarfan, Llanfair and Oak Field schools are to remain open, is to be welcomed.

The unsatisfactory decision-making process preceding the decision can best be described as muddled.

This has caused considerable unnecessary anxiety and distress to children, parents and school staff.

It is difficult to believe that this trauma has not affected the learning processes of the children in some way.

The Vale Council has the vital task of supporting the efforts of parents and staff of Oak Field, in bringing about significant improvements in the educational standards of the school.

This requires a clear vision and focus on the part of the council.

The appointment of a permanent headteacher and an improved staff to pupil ratio related to the needs of the school are priorities.

Gareth Jones,
Barry

'Use funds to fight animal cruelty on the front line'

I WOULD like to point out to Sophie the RSPCA regional media manager/spin doctor (GEM letters, last week) that *"reducing the amount of runners in the Grand National to prevent risks associated with bunching up at jumps"* reinforces my belief that the RSPCA is against jumping.

If you look at other horse races, you tend to see in smaller races with 8-12 and even 16 runners, that they tend to bunch together, racing three or four deep for long periods of time.

In the Grand National, horses spread across the track and can be a furlong behind; in fact, the bunching is not as bad as in other races with fewer runners.

An opinion by the RSPCA, based on a mathematical calculation – rather than looking at the sport as a challenge to jockey and horse– attacking horse racing is without any understanding or logic.

I believe the rank and file who work for the RSPCA are passionate and do care for the welfare of anmals, but management and policy-makers are destroying their core values.

Times are hard and any donations should filter down to the front line.

Having seen the trustees' report for 2010 on pay (this being the most recent available online) nine staff on £50,000-69,999, five on £70,000-79,999, three on £80,000-89,999 and another on £110,000-120,000 – one would think that donations given by the public would not mean so many high salaries.

I end with my opinion of the RSPCA: you have lost your way, stop attacking horse racing, stop wasting people's donations on high salaries and ludicrous legal costs.

Donations are given in the hope that most of it ends up fighting animal cruelty on the front line.

Christopher Herring,
Barry

HIGH TIDE TIMES
(UNTIL APRIL 4)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
28 Thur	06.54	10.2	19.13	10.1
29 Fri	07.33	10.3	19.54	10.2
30 Sat	08.11	10.1	20.33	10.0
31 Sun	09.51	9.8	22.14	9.7
01 Mon	10.37	9.4	23.00	9.3
02 Tues	11.24	8.9	23.51	8.7
03 Wed			12.25	8.2
04 Thur	00.59	8.2	13.46	7.9

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should always check with a tide table specific to their location.

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Deadline for health petition could be Easter weekend

A petition which insists that essential services at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend must be protected, is likely to be closed this weekend.

REPORT by TIM CHAPMAN

The petition was sparked because of fears that services could be downgraded, affecting people in the western Vale.

Coun Gwyn John of Llantwit Major, said: "The petition will be discussed at our town council on Thursday (today) and it may be wound up on March 31."

Local businesses and councillors have been collecting signatures from members of the public over the past five weeks.

The petition states that residents of Llantwit Major and district "*strongly object to changes at A and E and maternity services at the Princess of Wales Hospital, and that it should be a centre of excellence for the public*".

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board has emphasised that no decisions have been made with regard to the Princess of Wales Hospital.

On February 8, a protest march took place through Bridgend attended by an estimated 250 people.

At the time, a spokeswoman explained: "Along with other health boards in south Wales, ABM University Health Board carried out a 12-week period of public engagement at the end of last year to talk about possible ideas for future changes to some hospital services in south Wales.

"No decisions, or even detailed proposals, have yet been made. No proposals suggested the closure of any hospitals or emergency medicine departments.

"We are working together as health boards because some hospital services need to be reconfigured to improve the quality and reliability of care we give patients in the future."

A public meeting at Llantonian Hall on February 21 drew 65 concerned residents of the western Vale, and the petition grew momentum. A decision will have to be made as to whom the petition should be presented to.

Coun John said: "It may be presented to the Health Minister at the Senedd.

"I also understand that there are other areas on board with petitions, such as in Colwinston, the Valleys, and Bridgend."

The health boards are likely to put forward proposals on a reorganisation of services in early May.

That will be followed by an eight-week consultation.

Coun John added: "There will then be public meetings in Llantwit and Cowbridge, at which people will be able to put their views forward."

Llanblethian residents on a clean up mission

ABOVE: Llanblethian residents set out on their litter pick. (PHOTOGRAPH by MIKE WILCOCK).

A BAKER'S dozen of hearty and willing residents set out from Llanblethian Church Hall on Saturday, March 23, armed with pickers, sturdy red gloves, black bags, a trained eye for litter, and safety guidance from the Vale Council.

It was organised by the Llanblethian Community Group (LCG) and four groups covered the main village – one of these was north along path 46 towards the 'Eye Well'.

A LCG spokesman said: "There is so much that could be done to improve the area around the 'Eye Well', as it has particular historical significance.

"We found it was littered with heavy items, including an old car wheel.

"The group returned with 17 bags of litter. A massive thanks must go to Coun Geoff Cox, who arranged for the Vale Council to supply the residents with the necessary equipment for this worthwhile activity.

"Beverly and Dick Tonkin worked hard to provide sustenance at the end of the litter pick in the form of hot drinks and cakes. We were also joined by Vale MP Alun Cairns.

"Llanblethian Community Group would like to give a special thanks to Mike Wilcock who took the picture of our volunteers.

"Everyone agreed the initiative had been very successful and that we should arrange another litter pick soon."

Memories of a Group Captain

A MEETING of Cowbridge U3A was held at the town hall on March 13, and included a talk by Ron Powell, entitled 'Group Captain – from Hanoi to Barry Island'.

Like many RAF personnel at St Athan, on retirement Ron settled in the Vale of Glamorgan and expressed his pleasure at living in the area.

His talk illustrated the many challenges involved in training pilots and overcoming the need to come to terms with changes demanded by new technology. The fact that on this occasion he was able to also overcome the breakdown of the U3A's technology was a tribute to his professional response to a crisis! He held the audience totally captivated for an hour.

The next meeting will be in the usual venue of the Town Hall at 2pm on April 10, when the subject will be 'Reflections on Naval chaplaincy' by the Rev. Michael Wishart.

Due to numbers, please remember to bring your membership cards, or if a guest, join soon!

TB

Herb expert's lecture to Cowbridge group

A PACKED St Quentin's Suite at the Bear Hotel in Cowbridge on Wednesday, March 20, was enthralled by a talk on 'The World of Herbs' by guest speaker, Jekka McVicar.

This was no ordinary horticultural lecture – Jekka's presentation covered a fascinating insight into the history of herbs, growing them, cooking with them, curing ailments with them, even spicing up your love life with them.

Jekka is a senior figure in the Royal Horticultural Society and is a multi-gold award winner at the Chelsea Flower Show.

She is currently establishing a 'herboretum' at her herb farm in Gloucester, but was able to take the time to come to Cowbridge to speak after the Cowbridge Physic Garden's annual meeting.

ABOVE:
Mrs Jo Homfray (left) and Mrs Rose Clay (right) with Jekka McVicar at the St Quentin's Suite.

Chair of the Physic Garden, Mrs Jo Homfray, commented: "I'm thrilled that Jekka has been able to join us this evening and share her passion for herbs with us.

"It's especially pleasing that so many of our members and other interested parties have been able to hear her talk."

The next event for Cowbridge Physic Garden is the ever-popular plant sale which takes place in Old Hall gardens on Saturday, April 27.

MARTYN HURST

Bonnets, beanie hats – and a secret ballot!

THERE was a plethora of eggs, chickens, feathers, flowers and Easter bunnies on display at the March meeting of Southerndown WI!

Members had used their many creative skills and taken up the challenge to attend the meeting wearing an Easter bonnet. An assortment of sun hats, wedding hats, gardening hats – and even beanie hats – had been adorned, creating amusement for all.

A secret ballot was held to vote for the best bonnet and Linda's eggshell-covered creation was the outright winner – despite a few shells falling to the floor during the more formal proceedings of the evening.

An Easter egg was the prize although, in the circumstances, a tube of super glue may have been more appropriate!

The president, Meryl, managed to restore order to guide us through the news from the Glamorgan Federation of WIs.

Discussions were held regarding the National Federation's photographic competition, with its theme of inspirational women and a suggestion was made to hold a croquet evening during the summer months.

Dates of trips will be provided at future meetings. A plan was put in place to introduce small groups to follow specific interests, with the aim of continuing the WI's philosophy of inspiring women.

Suggestions included a book club, watercolour painting and embroidery, among others.

The committee will aim to schedule events in the coming months and all members will be welcome to attend.

The main area for discussion was the forthcoming Link meeting, when we invite specific local WIs to join us.

Our evening will incorporate a mixture of words and music, with invitations being sent out by the end of March for the meeting that will take place in June.

Tea and coffee were served, along with cakes and savouries, while Olwyn provided a quiz that included some mind-stretching riddles to round off a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

The next meeting will include hands-on flower arranging and will take place on Thursday, April 11, at 7.15 pm in the Church Hall, St Brides Major.

PM

Bonvilston burglary

POLICE are investigating a burglary at a house near Bonvilston, between 2 pm and 4 pm on Monday (March 25).

Among electrical items stolen were an X-Box, a black i-Pad 3, a Sony SLRA230 digital camera, an i-Phone 3 and a black Pioneer Blu Ray DVD player.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Barry CID on 01446 731606, 101, or Crimestoppers (free) on 0800 555111, quoting reference number 62130088960.

Burglars hit three houses in same street

POLICE in Llanharan are appealing for information after three neighbours were targeted by burglars on the same day.

Burglars forced entry to each of the detached properties in Parc Bryn Derwyn, Llanharan, between 1pm and 5pm on March 9 and a number of items were taken, such as car keys, cash and jewellery.

Contact 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 if you have information.

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Cowbridge Senior Citizens' meeting

ABOVE: Irene Jenkins, Mavis Ashford, Alun Cairns, Patricia Prothero and Eleanor Watkins.

AT the meeting held on Thursday, March 21, all present were delighted to hear that MP Alun Cairns had accepted our invitation to become president of our branch.

The speaker at the meeting was Neil Tomlins community fire safety officer, Llantrisant, who gave a very helpful and constructive talk on the dangers that we should be aware of in and around our homes.

He gave a demonstration of what is available from the Fire Service, eg fire and smoke alarms, alarms for deaf people, and special safety ashtrays, to prevent cigarette fires.

There were information sheets concerning kitchen safety (the most likely place for a fire to start in the home), electrical fires and naked lights etc.

Especially interesting was advice about having smoke alarms tested regularly, and working out an escape plan to vacate your property.

Our next meeting is at the Lesser Hall, at 1.30pm on Thursday, April 18, when we hope to have a visit from students from the music department of Atlantic College.

Mavis Ashford

Bridge results

RESULTS for Cowbridge and District (Llanbledddian) Bridge Club, Tuesday, March 19:

1st Pam Higgs and Brenda Grove 66.82%; 2nd Luba Ashworth and Sheena Sarjeant 60.45%; 3rd Hugh Williams and Pauline Lane 59.02%. ME

COMMUNITY NEWS

TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Your local correspondent is Nancy Davidge, "Tynewydd", Llangan. (01656) 860303

Easter services

THE Easter Sunday dawn service will take place at St Mary Hill Church at 6.30am, followed by breakfast. Everyone will be welcome.

St Canna's

ST CANNA'S Church, Llangan, will celebrate Easter Sunday at 6.30pm. A service of songs of praise will take place on Sunday, March 31.

Saron Chapel

THIS year, Saron Chapel, Treoes, will celebrate Easter Sunday at 11am; officiating minister, Rev Richard Roberts. As always, a warm welcome will be extended to everyone.

Draw winners

ST MARY HILL 100 Club spring draw winners were: Miss Evie Vaughan-Jones, Mrs B Barrat, Isobel Townsend, Jack Hall and Mrs L Williams. The next draw will take place in June.

Vale Council cabinet comes to town

THE cabinet of the Vale Council will be bringing one of its 'on the road' meetings to Cowbridge on Monday, April 22.

The cabinet meeting will begin at 6pm in Cowbridge Comprehensive School, and it will be followed by a question and answer session.

The evening is scheduled to finish at 8pm.

Search and rescue move

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

TwoAgustaWestland AW189 helicopters will fly from the new search and rescue base at St Athan, and Mr Cairns says that it will result in improved flying times and better coverage of high-risk areas across south Wales and the Bristol Channel.

At the moment, there are 10 search and rescue centre in the UK, and that will still be the case under the new contract.

Vale AM Jane Hutt said: "The new helicopter search and rescue base at St Athan is also good news for the St Athan Enterprise Zone which is focused on the aerospace sector.

"It will be valuable in enhancing the local economy."

Choir heads to Cyprus

COWBRIDGE Male Voice Choir fly out to financially-troubled Cyprus on March 31, for a week-long tour when it will perform two main concerts for charities.

The first will take place on April 2 at the British Sovereign Base in Dhekela, Southern Cyprus when all proceeds from the concert will go to the Help the Heroes Fund.

The second concert will take place in northern Cyprus at Bellapais Abbey, and the proceeds will be distributed to local charities by the Abbey authorities.

The choir returns home on April 6 and will immediately prepare for their concert on Saturday May 11 at Llantillo Croesseny.

Dancing – and egg rolling at Y Bont Faen

FOR the past two weeks, pupils in year-6 at Y Bont Faen have been rehearsing an amazing piece of modern dance, to perform at both the Sherman Theatre, Cardiff and the Memorial Theatre, in Barry.

Both performances were outstanding, receiving incredible receptions. A huge llongyfarchiadau – congratulations to the pupils and also to Miss Jones for helping them create their work.

Red Nose Day was an exciting time for pupils' decorated egg rolling with the PTA.

"Lots of eggs were brought in – we've nearly got rid of the smell. The eggs took their chances as they were rolled…or pushed in some cases, down the hill! The furthest rolled egg won a prize donated by the PTA – so there was a lot at stake!

"The eggs, the crafty cakes and the costumes for Red Nose Day were wonderful and on behalf of the PTA we'd like to thank you all for taking such an active part!" a spokesperson said.

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'COME, LET US ENTERTAIN YOU' *say Autumn Sounds*

AUTUMN SOUNDS is appearing at Llantonian Hall on Saturday, April 6, with the curtain going up at 7.30pm.

The group is more of an entertainment ensemble, han a choir and has been inspired by Marianne Harman to give people in their more mature years, the chance to shine on stage.

She told The GEM: "We have artists from Llantwit and around the Vale who have given their time and talents to help the first show in our home town.

"The aim of the group was to get people interested in getting out of the house, meeting new people and going on stage for the first time in their lives."

Marianne has lived in Llantwit Major since the 1960s and, over the years, has taken part in many local pantomimes, summer shows and plays.

She said: "The Pantomime Society recently folded and with it the legacy us 'oldies' left. People have said there is apathy in Llantwit and the sense of community has gone.

"I know things change and people would prefer to watch reality shows, but I wonder if we can change that for one night.

"It is going to be a case of no remote controls for a few hours!"

People can pay on the door or buy tickets at Chris Williams optician's.

Easter in the park

FAMILIES can get involved in an Easter egg hunt around Bryngarw Country Park from 10am – 12pm on March 30 and 31, at Brynmenyn.

Families will follow a map around the park, take part in Easter games, and meet special guests along the way.

Full details online at www.grandpavilion.co.uk or on 01656 815995.

Did you know you can read your GEM online?

cowbridge-today.co.uk

YOUNG COUPLE'S DESPAIR AFTER TRIP TO LEISURE CENTRE...

'Our disabled son has a right to his dignity'

A YOUNG Barry mother has told The GEM she was "shocked" at the treatment of her teenage son, who suffers from cerebral palsy, during a trip to the local leisure centre.

It led Parkwood Community Leisure to issue a fulsome apology to the family, stressing that the company had learned lessons from what had happened.

The parents decided they should not be identified in The GEM's report in order to preserve their son's anonymity.

The mother explained: "We visited Barry Leisure Centre with our son, who is a wheelchair user, so we could use the swimming pool.

"The usual disabled changing facilities were doubling up as a first aid room because of building work for the new cafe area.

"We didn't think that was a problem – just a case of moving a few first aid items from the bed there, and changing our son.

"But, there were also no electrics or lights available in the room."

Changing a teenage boy in poor light wasn't feasible, so the couple spoke to a member of staff.

"The pool attendant said she would summon the manager, and suggested we could either leave the door open, or try doing it in the dark.

"I wondered whether the children and adults swimming in the children's pool really wanted to see two unknown adults in a state of undress, and why our son should be in full view giving him no privacy."

The couple decided a lack of dignity for their son wasn't acceptable so an alternative was found.

"We were moved to

by TIM CHAPMAN

the family changing area, and found only one cubicle was wide enough to allow a wheelchair in.

"On returning from the pool, this changing room was not available.

"The pool attendant told us we should give him a shower first whilst we waited.

"However, there was no way I was sitting him on the floor of the shower ing area as it was filthy and had black mould in places and no shower chair was available.

"She said there was nothing else she could suggest.

"We ended up struggling to change our son in the middle of the changing room corridor, on the dirty floor in full view of people and in front of the lockers making it difficult for people to access their clothes.

"I was extremely upset by the situation.

"The thing I found upsetting more than anything else was the discrimination he faced because he was not able bodied.

"He was expected to be changed either in full view of people with no privacy, or lie on a grubby floor because the leisure centre had made the decision to ignore the needs of its disabled customers.

"Where was his right to dignity?"

She explained: "My son loves swimming. It is the only form of exercise he can do – he can't move from the waist down, and the exercise helps to tone his muscles."

The mother said that she and her husband both work, and bringing up their son had been an exhausting experience and had involved having to fight for equipment such as a specially-adapted bed he can use at home.

To endure the experience at the leisure centre has left them in despair.

They have been in touch with the Vale Council and Parkwood Community Leisure to explain how upsetting the experience was.

She added: "From now on, we are likely to go to pools in Cardiff or Bridgend. One thing I am sure of is, we will never visit the centre again."

Parkwood Community Leisure, which runs Barry Leisure Centre, told The GEM it was very disappointed that the family did not experience the high levels of customer care that it expected to deliver.

In a written apology to the teenager and his mother and father, the area manager, John de Maid said the company was "deeply sorry" for what had happened.

Mr de Maid said: "It is with regret that your son was not afforded the same standard of changing facilities as other users, and I want to reassure you that this is not the attitude held by employees of Barry Leisure Centre and, indeed, Parkwood Community Leisure.

"We take a pride in equal opportunities and are deeply sorry that this was not evident during your visit.

"I would also like to express regret for the lack of communication between staff and customers, which led to these circumstances and made a bad situation worse."

Mr de Maid explained that works to the leisure centre had led to confusion.

"As you have become aware, Barry Leisure Centre is seeing some exciting changes to improve the service and facilities offered.

"Although every effort has been made to ensure high standards, unfortunately these developments have caused some operational issues during this overhaul.

"I believe the decision to use the disabled changing room as a temporary first aid room was made in haste, without consideration and, indeed, was a mistake on our part.

"We have now relocated the first aid room and brought the disabled changing room back into full service, after having the electrical fault addressed.

"In addition, we have ensured the cleanliness issues you have pointed out have also been resolved and more resource is being put into this area during busy periods."

Mr de Maid offered his "sincere apologies", adding that lessons had been learned.

Vale AM Jane Hutt took part in the Walk for Life recently with among others, in the centre of the back row, Colin (left) and Alan (right).

'He ain't heavy – he's my brother'

ALAN DONATES KIDNEY TO COLIN

THERE'S a famous song by the Hollies – 'He ain't heavy, he's my brother' – that that could have been written for two brothers from Barry.

by TIM CHAPMAN

When Colin Peterson discovered his kidneys were closing down during a routine medical check-up, in stepped older brother Alan (62) to donate one of his own own.

The Vale Assembly Member, Jane Hutt, who met both men during the annual Kidney Wales' Walk for Life in Barry on March 17, hailed Alan's selflessness.

"This is a wonderful story of a Barry man donating a kidney to his brother who was suffering from kidney disease. Alan is a kidney donor hero."

Colin (56) certainly agrees: "Alan really went through it – sometimes it is worse for the donor.

"I discovered the kidneys were closing down during a medical check-up that I needed to hold onto my heavy goods' licence.

"My wife desperatelywanted to help me and my son, Lyndon and daughter, Emily, but Alan was the best match.

"I had the operation n November 11 at Heath Hospital.

"We went in together on the Sunday and had the operation on the Monday.

"Alan went down an hour before me, and I was down there for four hours

"An hour or two after the op, we were both sitting up chatting together. We've spoken every day since.

"The team in the transplant unit are wonderful, wonderful people."

The brothers are both well known in the town, due to their long association with the Sea View Lads Angling Club. Alan is also the popular manager of The Grapevine in the Romilly area of the town.

Alan said that when he found out Colin's health was in serious danger, he had no hesitation in making the sacrifice.

"Colin's kidneys were diseased and it looked like he would need dialysis, so I've no regrets about donating my kidney.

"The transplant team are wonderful, excellent. They have all the back-up and couldn't do enough."

Jane Hutt pointed out that there were large numbers of people who were susceptible to kidney problems.

"Over three million people in the UK are at risk of kidney disease.

"The Walk for Life helps to raise funds for research and remind us all that promoting an active lifestyle by walking or running is important to prevent ill health and kidney disease.

"It is great that this successful event takes place every year in Barry."

COMMUNITY NEWS
ST BRIDES MAJOR

Your local correspondent is Patricia Bevan-Morgan (01656) 880418

THE spring newsletter of the Heritage Coast came out this last week showing pictures of the dreadful flooding which took place in Dunraven, and also the story of what the area was like during World War Two.

THE children of the St Brides Major Primary School recently took a morning walk through part of the village and later in the afternoon I was invited to answer their questions on the history of what they had observed. It is good that the school and children are taking an interest in their locality.

SATURDAY, March 16 was the first anniversary of the opening of the community link library service held in the church hall since the Mobile Library was discontinued.

The morning of celebration was well attended and everyone enjoyed the welcome cup of tea and Welsh cakes.

Also it was a chance to meet author Leela Dutt and to hear about her work.

If you haven't been to visit the library yet, do pop in and see what there is on offer.

Five boxes of new books are collected every month from the Vale Library to ensure a fresh selection – from fiction and biographies to historical, crime and thrillers, as well as a good selection of children's and teens' stories.

The library is also building up a range of travel, cookery, hobbies and local history section.

Why travel to Llantwit or Bridgend when you can have the community library on your doorstep? You can also purchase your green waste bags and blue bags at the library.

Library opening hours – Wednesday 3.30pm–7pm, Friday 10.30am–11.30am, Saturday 10am–noon.

Sunday March 24 was Palm Sunday and the start of Holy Week with service in St Bridget's at 11 am.

At the last community council meeting on Monday 11 at All Saints, Southerndown it was proposed that the village once again enter the Best Kept Village Competition.

The village last won the competition in 1993 and a lot has happened over the last 20 years, but if everyone pulled together, St Brides could do it again – so why not have a go?

Total of £485 raised for charity

First Responders' Llantonian evening

The East Vale First Responders raised £485 at a special night at Llantonian Hall, cash that will go to heart and cancer related charities.

Spokesman Byron Evans said: "We held an Abba and Friends evening which was really well supported. About 80 people were there.

"A lot were in fancy dress as John Tavolta, Del Boy and other characters.

"An auction was held too. We want to thank Hair Studio and Celtic Cameras of Bridgend for getting behind the event."

Money was also raised thanks to Breast Cancer ribbons made by Carolyne Risby.

Byron added: "On June 15 there is going to be a summer ball at St Athan Golf Club on behalf of British Heart Foundation."

In the past work through British Heart Foundation by former Llantwit Major mayor, Molly Lane, helped provide funds for defibrillators in Llantwit and Cowbridge which helped to save local lives.

Scarves for all!

WITH demonstrations of different lengths and widths of beautiful scarves, Vale NFU Ladies had a fascinating time with entertainer for the evening, Rosemary Scaddon.

Linda Williams gave the vote of thanks. Chairperson, Janet Lewis, said that a letter had been received from the Alzheimer's research charity thanking the ladies for a £400 donation.

PENDOYLAN'S PASSION FOR FASHION

Report and photos by
DREW JOHN

A fashion show, in association with John Lewis, was held at the Copthorne Hotel on March 16 to raise funds for Pendoylan Church in Wales Primary School.

The Cardiff branch of John Lewis generously fitted and dressed over 50 pupils and parents in some dazzling outfits from their spring/summer 2013 collection.

It was a wonderfully stylish evening, with lots of hair and beauty stalls providing tips and selling their wares, including The Hair Business, Cowbridge, who donated their time and expertise, styling every model and making them all look amazing!

The evening was such fun, raising lots of money for the school fund, and we thank everyone involved in making it such a success; in particular: John Lewis, the Copthorne Hotel, Bobbi Brown, Kiehls, Tony Wilson and the Hair Business Cowbridge.

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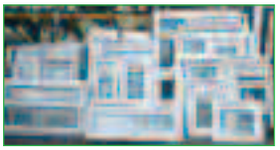

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PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE IN TOUGH TIMES

Forecast for the economy as bleak as the weather

THE chill winds of March 2013 somehow reflect the difficult times we are facing, as we enter a new financial year, with grim economic prospects, now and in the future.

This was the view of the Institute of Fiscal Studies, as the impact of the Chancellor's Budget last week was analysed.

From April 1, the new timetable of UK Government cuts and changes to tax and benefits will be faced by many who are working, by those who are seeking work, as well as those who are vulnerable.

This will include those who will be subject to the 'Bedroom Tax', affecting over 650 households in the Vale.

In the UK as a whole, this affects almost 540,000 households with one spare bedroom and 120,000 households with two spare bedrooms losing 14 per cent and 25 per cent of their housing benefit respectively.

How are these households going to manage? The advice services, like CAB, have been able to provide specialist advice with the support of Legal Aid. They will lose that vital source of support on April 1.

Child benefit and working tax credit will also be frozen by the UK Government.

The new £10,000 threshold helping lower paid tax payers in Wales is welcome, yet some of the richest people in the country will get big tax cuts from April 1.

We called on the Chancellor to increase investment in our infrastructure with a boost to our capital funding, to enable us to invest in transport, schools, housing, flood protection.

The disappointing news on Budget day was to hear that they are cutting our revenue budgets. These have already been costed to fund our public services next year and the following year.

Now we will have to find another £32m from April 1, and over £80m from April 2014.

Overall, we face a real terms cut to our Welsh Government Budget of £1.7bn by 2014-15 – as a result of this spending round and last week's Budget.

Yes, we received some consequentials as a result of a new scheme for house buyers, but it is in the form of loans and equity investment.

Welsh Assembly Notes

by Vale AM
JANE HUTT
(Minister for Finance and Leader of the House)

We are already launching our own NewBuy Cymru mortgage guarantee scheme, which will enable home buyers to access high loan-to-value mortgages purchasing 'new-build' houses or flats up to the value of £250,000 with a 5 per cent deposit. That starts in June in Wales, backed by the Welsh Government.

This will help to kick-start the housing sector and has been welcomed by house builders in Wales.

We are also launching the £100m Housing Bond, to fund the provision of 1,000 affordable homes to rent in Wales, following our boost in this year's Budget for the social housing grant.

We welcomed the fact that the Budget document referred to the continuing discussions we are having with the UK Government on funding for improvements to the M4 in south Wales.

This was positive, and we look forward to concluding those negotiations and hearing from the UK Government on the Silk Report for further opportunities for borrowing and tax devolution to stimulate the economy.

But the Chancellor's growth forecast has been halved to 0.6% per cent. The forecasts for the next Spending Review for 2015/16 are grim. Our budget is shrinking, and so is the economy. Mary Powell-Chandler of Save the Children said on Budget day: "None of the measures announced today target the poorest children – 'aspiration nation' rings hollow for poor families aspiring to work their way out of poverty."

In Barry, Molly Conway, of Gibbonsdown Residents Board, told a newspaper that scrapping the rise in fuel duty and bringing forward the introduction of a £144 flat rate pension to 2016, would bring little comfort to pensioners and reminded us in this bitter weather, that there was no constraint on big increases in gas and electricity prices.

We have a moral responsibilty and commitment in the Welsh Government to do what we can to support children, young people, families and pensioners through these tough times.

That is why we found the money to meet the 10 per cent cut in council tax benefit made by the UK Government.

That is why we are keeping the educational maintenance allowances, the free school breakfasts, and concessionary fares.

That is why we are funding jobs for young people and expanding our apprenticeship schemes and expanded Flying Start.

But it is going to get harder and harder as we move into this financial year. Easter Monday will herald more austerity, hardship and insecurity for many.

I am determined to use every lever and power to support people and businesses through these uncertain times.

Three-year ban for driver who jumped level crossing red light

A MOTORIST who jumped a red light and weaved around the barriers at a level crossing, almost colliding with a pedestrian in the process, has been banned from the road for three years, following a British Transport Police (BTP) investigation.

Patricia Ann King, aged 69, of Brook Vale, Pencoed, denied dangerous driving but was found guilty on March 12, following a trial at Cardiff Crown Court.

King was sentenced to six months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, and was ordered to carry out 150 hours of unpaid work on behalf of the community. She must also pay £750 prosecution costs and pass an extended driving test on completion of her three-year disqualification.

The court was told that around 11.30am on Friday, March 16 2012, King drove her silver Mercedes A-Class towards Pencoed level crossing on Hendre Road, Pencoed, when the automatic barriers began lowering.

She then overtook a Ford pick-up truck that was waiting at the crossing before weaving through the barriers while the warning lights were flashing and the alarms sounding.

The Mercedes almost struck a pedestrian who was crossing the road on the other side of the track, the court heard. Moments later, two passenger trains went through.

Both occupants of the Ford pick-up were said to be shocked by her actions, with one describing King's driving as "reckless and extremely dangerous – it was total and utter stupidity".

The incident was also witnessed via CCTV by the signalman working at Port Talbot signal box. He later confirmed that Pencoed level crossing was fully operational and in perfect working order on the day in question.

King admitted to being the owner and driver of the silver Mercedes A-Class, adding she was late for an appointment.

PC Dave Miles, the officer in charge of the investigation, said: "King's actions were reckless and extremely dangerous, and the severity of the sentence shows just how seriously the courts take this type of crime.

"Her driving not only endangered her own life, but also the lives of others – no-one more so than the pedestrian she very nearly collided with. Quite clearly, level crossing misuse is just not worth the few seconds you might save.

"We continue to work closely with Network Rail to raise awareness and educate those who use level crossings on the dangers of misuse.

"Level crossings – and other crossings where road, footpaths and rail cross – are designed to keep people safe and, when used correctly, that is exactly what they do.

"However, drivers who willingly flout the law and place themselves and others in danger should be in no doubt that if caught doing so, they will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

Adding that Commons touch to Red Nose Day!

THE Vale MP, Alun Cairns, joined in the fun at Ysgol Y Bont Faen, in Cowbridge when he visited the school on Red Nose Day.

Afterwards, he reported: "The children all clearly enjoyed the egg decorating and fundraising activities. As we all know, Comic Relief do a terrific job, helping change the lives of many thousands of people here in the UK and in Africa."

CRAFT FAIR

LAZY Sunday Afternoon Craft Fairs is bringing its hugely popular craft fair to Cowbridge on Sunday, April 7.

The event will take place at the town hall.

There will be many stallholders selling a wide range of handmade and handcrafted items and there will be a charity raffle in aid of The Meningitis Trust.

Entry is free on the day to the public, and just £12 for stall holders bookable in advance.

To secure a space, email lazycraft@hotmail.co.uk or call 01656 768253.

Girls' business skills boost Velindre cause

THREE friends from Pendoylan Primary School, aged nine, used their entrepreneurial skills to raise money for Velindre Hospital.

They first came up with the idea during playtime at school and started to write ideas down about what items they were going to make and sell to raise money.

The outcome was each of them made a number of items to be sold at an event in Ystradowen in February, which was a great success.

Plans are well under way for more events and their friends and family are very proud of them.

ND

Vale of Glamorgan bridge club

RESULTS from Monday March 8 (22 pairs):

1st. Ray Smith & Gwynne Maddox 66.50%; 2nd. John Henson & Geoff Tinkler 64.39%; 3rd. Mike Best & Kevin Maddox 60.25%; 4th. John Beard & Liam Sheridan 59.32%; 5th. Vida Halford & Glyn Williams 57.82%; 6th. Debbie & Simon Richards 57.57%.

As advised, the 2013 AGM will take place on Monday, April 8, at 7pm prompt. **BS**

OWLS 4 U AT THE BOYS' BRIGADE!

THE 2nd Llantwit Major Boys' Brigade recently had a visit from Anne and Alan from Owls 4 U (who help rescued owls), who brought along six of their feathered friends to meet the boys and helpers.

The boys spent an amazing evening finding out about owls and being offered the opportunity to get very close to these magnificent birds.

The picture shows junior section boys – Henry, Owen, Sam and Luke – along with one of the leaders, Kayleigh.

We would like to thank Anne and Alan for taking the time to visit us. It was a wonderful experience for the boys (and helpers!).

The company currently has vacancies in all sections and is open to boys from year-1 upwards. For more information please contact Debbie on (01446) 796208.

Mrs D Chapman, Officer, 2nd Llantwit Major Boys' Brigade

Pupils' Easter service at St Cadoc's

LLANCARFAN Primary School pupils enjoyed an uplifting spring walk to their Easter service at the historic St Cadoc's church, home to 15th century paintings of St George and the Dragon.

St Cadoc's is a focal part of life for this top performing Vale school and an important part of pupil's Easter Celebrations. Pupils read selected Easter verses, joining together with staff and the local community to celebrate in song!

Llancarfan Primary School is also preparing for its annual Easter Duck Race to be held on April 12 at 4pm, which sees more than 1,000 ducks float down stream with prizes for first, second and third place up for grabs.

"It's always a fantastic afternoon for everyone; wellies are a must, and it's a bit of a giggle seeing the head in waders chasing ducks!" said Emma Marshman, parent and chairwoman of Llancarfan PTA.

This year, The Fox and Hounds is putting on a special lunch menu to support the event and cakes will be on sale in the afternoon.

Anyone wanting to help support Llancarfan PTA by sponsoring a duck, please contact Llancarfan Primary School or The Fox and Hounds, Llancarfan. Valuable funds raised will be going towards equipment for the school's information technology curriculum.

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NOTICE

VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116

TAKE NOTICE that the Vale of Glamorgan Council, as Highway Authority intends to apply to the Magistrates' Court sitting at Fitzalan Place, Cardiff, CF24 0RZ on the **2nd** day of **May 2013 at 10.00am** for an order that the highway at land which fronts the Vale Garage, The Herberts, Cowbridge in the Vale of Glamorgan which is shown hatched in black on the plan attached hereto, be authorised to be stopped up on the ground that it is unnecessary.

Any person wishing to object to the stopping up of the Highway as described above may attend and be heard on the said date.

The effect of the said order is shown on the plan attached hereto and a copy of this notice and the plan may be viewed at Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan and at the Docks Office, Subway Road, Barry, CF63 4RT on Monday - Friday between the hours of 9.30am and 4.30pm

Dated this 13th day of March, 2013.

Debbie Marles,
Head of Legal Services,
Vale of Glamorgan Council,
Civic Offices, Holton Road,
Barry, Vale of Glamorgan CF63 4RU

VALE MP's VIEWPOINT

'SEARCH AND RESCUE MOVE WILL GIVE BOOST TO LOCAL ECONOMY'

Vale MP Alun Cairns reports to GEM readers

DO you know how far away the nearest helicopter search and rescue team is based? Earlier this week, the UK Government announced that a new £1.6bn contract for search and rescue helicopter services which will see St Athan become one of the new bases for a state of the art search & rescue fleet.

The Department for Transport has signed a contract with Bristow Helicopters Ltd to provide search and rescue helicopter services in the UK.

Helicopters will be able to reach a larger area of the UK search and rescue region within one hour of take off from St Athan.

Based on historic incident data, it is estimated that there will be an overall improvement in flying times to incidents of around 20 per cent (from 23 to 19 minutes).

The AgustaWestland AW189 helicopters will fly from a new search & rescue base at St Athan, providing improved flying times and better coverage of high-risk areas across south Wales and the Bristol Channel.

Currently, approximately 70 per cent of high and very high risk areas within the UK search and rescue region are reachable by helicopter within 30 minutes. Under the new contract, approximately 85 per cent of the same area would be reached within this time-frame.

The new contract represents a major investment by the Government in providing a search and rescue helicopter service, using the most-up-to-date helicopters and meeting the highest professional standards.

I'm really pleased that St Athan has been selected as one of only ten bases for search & rescue helicopter teams across the UK. This is excellent news and a further boost to the economy of the area.

This investment, of course, follows the good news last month that the MoD base at St Athan will become the home for the Royal Signals.

That commitment guarantees MoD funds in the area, with increased spend from soldiers through to contracts for local builders for structural projects on site.

The contract for the search and rescue service will help the local supply chain, providing and sustaining skilled jobs.

I'm certain that all these developments at St Athan will give a massive boost to the local community and wider economy of the Vale.

It will, of course, be important to work with the local community to satisfy any concerns they may have about the arrival of the search and rescue base.

On safety grounds, it must be acknowledged that this will be a major advantage for the Vale and south Wales.

There had been concerns across the south Wales coast at the loss of the base at Chivenor, but I am pleased that the Government has responded more positively than we could have hoped for and has established the search and rescue base in the Vale.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Branch Manager Phil Powell feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service the Vale, Bridgend, RCT and Porthcawl areas and Phil is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. *'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'*

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Drink wisely poster wins award for local students

AT an award ceremony hosted by Jane Hutt AM in the Pierhead Building, Cardiff Bay, pupils from across south Wales were awarded prizes for posters they had designed. highlighting the importance of learning how to drink wisely.

This was part of the Soroptimists' regional project supported by the regional president, Pam Allison, of Barry Soroptimists.

The winners of the secondary school category were Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School sixth formers Katie Winton and Tara Gulwell.

Jackie Memory, head of sixth form, Kate Winter and Tara Gulwell, pictured with Jane Hutt.

The AM commented: "The winners designed excellent posters, which will have a huge influence on young people, with the top award going to Tara Gulwell. The poster will be laminated and 1,000 copies will be sent to schools in Wales with a very effective message for all generations to be 'Alcohol-wise.' Congratulations to all those who took part and to the Soroptimists for mounting this important project."

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Team Elis wins *'Do You Dare?'*

ON Saturday (March 23) Team Elis, made up of Alun Williams, Catherine Hunt and Andrea and Pete Gardner, took part in Ty Hafan's "Do you Dare?' challenge in Dare Valley Park, Aberdare.

The team had to endure a two-mile mountain run, blind rock climbing, canoe relay, memory test and tyre flipping to win. All they had to do was be the quickest team to complete all events

Team Elis made it over the finishing line first – in freezing conditions and six inches of snow.

They took part in the event as a 'thank you' to the Ty Hafan children's hospice at Sully, for caring for Elis, Alun's baby daughter, who was born with Charge Syndrome, and sadly passed away in March 2010, when she was just 16 months old.

If anyone would like to donate, go to justgiving.com/teamelis

TALES FROM THE VALE

The Mabsant was a colourful occasion

THIS article is taken from the book 'The Vale of Glamorgan, Scenes and Tales among the Welsh', and the explanatory notes are by Angharad Wynne.

The observations were made in the early 1800s by an anonymous Welshman, who was known to lawyers in Lincoln's Inn, London.

He was described as "a tall, solitary old gentleman who visited his native Vale of Glamorgan every long vacation".

His notebook was published in book form in 1839 after his death, and is still available.

THE MABSANT

Every llan or parish in Wales once celebrated its own Mabsant or Saint day.

While it was based on church tradition, its celebrations latterly took on a colourful and very secular nature. The author of the notebook describes local Glamorganshire occasions:

"The Mabsant is the celebration of the holiday of the tutelary Saint of the village, after whom the church and the place are generally called, and is an occasion of great gaiety in the villages of our neighborhood. Profuse is the finery then displayed by the country maidens, and many the arts they practice to captivate the attentions of the rustics. The chief amusement is dancing; but it is, beside, a time of great carousing, - of ball-playing, and sometimes fights and uproar."

He goes on to relate in some detail an occasion of the Llantwit Mabsant, which would have been dedicated to St Illtyd and probably celebrated around his feast day of 6 November. "The evening entertainment for such occasions usually took the form of a Noson Lawen, a mixture of Welsh folk singing, harp playing, music making and dance. In this instance, the evening begins with a harper who is noted as playing the old Welsh air *'Ar hyd y nos'*. Later, the dance begins in "the 'church-loft', which in the times of the Lords Marchers, was a place for holding courts of law," This building is today known as Llantwit Major's old Town Hall.

He paints a picture of young courting couples dancing sprightly, watched, and occasionally joined, by other rustics and some of "better degree". Beer was provided, and sweethearts, resting from the dance would share a mug. He tells how a couple of old women sold gingerbread from baskets; "These wily crones passed along from one to the other of them as they sat on benches, complimenting the vain girls on the prettiness of their dress, or of their persons, and the young men on their good dancing; and this coaxed the simple-hearted creatures into a purchase…..Great was the delight of the rustic lovers at treating their sweethearts to a penny-worth of gingerbread!"

The date of Saint Days are, in the main, relatively easy to find out through church calendars. This ancient local tradition of community celebration would be relatively easy to resurrect.

Are you inspired by the Tales from the Vale? Would you like to take an active part in keeping the heritage of the rural Vale alive?

If so, Creative Rural Communities may be able to help. We offer support for community projects that conserve our unique heritage.

We can do this supporting events, festivals, exhibitions or other activities which celebrate theheritage of the rural Vale, a range of projects which improve the rural Vale's natural, cultural or built heritage.

For further information and to discuss your ideas, contact Helen Blackmore, Creative Rural Communities, on 01446 704828, or email: hblackmore@vale-ofglamorgan.org.uk.

ANGHARAD WYNNE

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'Progress is being made in Rhoose'

GEM reader Richard Barnes reports

FOLLOWING the planning protest meeting on March 3, the Rhoose residents are now seeing some signs of action from the Welsh Government and Vale Council.

Firstly, the Taylor Wimpey signs have been removed from a site in Rhoose Point as the change of use and planning application have not been fully completed or approved.

Also, the Vale Assembly Member, Jane Hutt, met with a delegation from Rhoose last week, to discuss planning, and Rhoose funding for amenities and improvements in the coming financial year.

It was a positive meeting our AM has offered to assist in following up on the environmental suitability of the land in the LDP designated for housing, given the many flooding issues that have been raised over previous years.

Ms Hutt has also offered to walk the Rhoose and Rhoose Point area on the April 13 with the delegation and residents, to further understand the residents' issues and see first hand the proposed sites.

On April 6, at Stewart Rd Community Centre there is a consultation morning arranged by Creative Wales, that will give residents an opportunity to provide feedback on what amenities they would like to see in Rhoose and how the Vale Council can assist with funding improvements,

Lastly, the Rhoose Point Residents Association has co-opted some Rhoose residents onto the committee with the aim of forming a Rhoose Residents' Association to lobby for amenities and to oppose the current planning strategy.If any Rhoose resident wishes to join the committee to assist at this point then please email *derek@restec-trhoosepoint.co.uk*. A new website and association will follow in the coming months.

High Street's bonnet parade

ON Easter Saturday, March 30, the Easter bonnet parade will be taking place in High Street, Barry.

Bob Armstrong, of the local traders, said: "It is great to see a return of one of High Street's great tradtiions.

"The parade will start at Hubanas at 11am and the children will parade up and down the street.

"There will be prizes for best bonnet and fancy dress.

"Afterwards, there will be a Mad Hatter's Tea Party in Hubanas."

The bonnet parade has three age categories – three years old to five years old, six years old to 11 years old, and 12 to 100.

Over the holiday period many of the Barry High Street businesses are putting on activities and entertainment for children.

WHAT'S ON *in brief*

Fashion show

FOLLOWING the great success with their fashion show last year, the Porthcawl Cancer Research UK committee is hosting another show on April 6, at All Saints church hall (doors open 6.30pm for 7pm).

Samantha B of Ewenny is bringing her spring collection to the town for ladies to help the fight against cancer.

Tickets £5, include a glass of wine and nibbles, from Diane Jones (01656 784762), Sue Sharp (01656 773670), or pay at the door.

Mass in Blue

CARDIFF Polyphonic Choir will present Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* on April 12 at the Dora Stoutzker Hall, Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Contact website www.cardiffpolyphonic.org.uk.

VALE RESORT COLLECTS A TOP INDUSTRY AWARD

THE Vale Resort at Hensol scooped a top industry award for its leisure division, at the annual 59 Club Service Excellence Awards.

The resort's leisure membership sales team picked up the award for its approach to customer service during the sales process during 2012.

The 59 Club focuses on member surveys and mystery shopping audits in the leisure and events industry to maintain high levels of customer service. It carried out a number of mystery shopping visits at the Vale Resort.

Paul Beddoe, sales and marketing director of the Vale Resort, said: "We are absolutely delighted to have beaten off some stiff competition from some of the UK's best leisure resorts to be presented with this prestigious award.

"Our leisure membership sales team work hard throughout the year to offer a professional service, by providing exacting levels of customer care – and to be recognised in this way by the industry's major benchmarking organisation, is a real honour.

"This award really is a tribute to the team's dedicated efforts."

Mr Beddoe added: "It's our unending focus on the customers' objectives of joining our gym that helps makes our sales process stand head and shoulders above that of our competitors.

"However, once they come to see our first-rate product, as well as the fact that we don't tie them into annual contracts, they are usually sold on the spot."

Talygarn Vaulters excel (AND MICHIGAN HAS THE LAST LAUGH!)

SEVERAL weeks ago, I was contacted by students from Hartpury College, Gloucester, and asked if we would take our vaulters along to a charity evening they were running and give a demonstration.

I explained that we have only been vaulting for a year and were fairly 'novice,' but they had seen photos on our website from previous events and were keen for us to come.

The event was to take place on March 22. I spoke to all the parents and agreed to take Squad A and two horses. As both horses hadn't been anywhere since the English champs, we decided on taking them to the beach on the basis that if we could do it there, then Hartpury Arena would be okay!

It was a bit of a challenge to start, but both horses settled down and the kids loved the experience of vaulting on the beach; we also gained quite an audience.

Over the next few weeks, the squad worked on the routine and as it was coming on so well, I decided to take squad B as well.

Hartpury College sent me a poster about the event advertising a presentation by Talygarn Vaulters, after the dressage to music demonstration, but they had changed the date to March 20!

This made a big difference as Robyn had a school tournament in north Wales, Jess was in an eisteddfod, all the kids had school the next day, and none of us was likely to get home much before midnight.

I was also running a show jumping competition at home that evening so it meant organising staff as well. Everyone agreed to go, so we loaded the horses and set off for Gloucester.

Michigan vaulting

We arrived at around 7pm. Some of the parents hadn't been to Hartpury before and didn't realise how big a venue it is.

The students made us welcome and the parents organised the photos, videos, kids changing, and helped with the horses.

After a quick warm up in the practice arena helpers Cerys and Tracy took the horses into the main arena to warm up and to let them get used to the surroundings.

I gave a short talk to the audience and we started with *Splash*. Squad B performed the Lion King team display followed by nine-year-old old Poppy's individual display. Robyn and Ffion did an elegant pairs display to 'Skyfall' which broke into 'Gangnam style' half way through.

At this point, we changed horses to *Michigan*. Squad A performed an individual a set of moves in canter and then a team freestyle in walk, followed by Carys's first individual public performance in canter.

I was so pleased with *Michigan*, as this is the horse that raised a laugh when I said I was going to try vaulting with him.

The audience gave us a huge applause and the students announced that they had raised £1,000 for the Air Ambulance.

Before we finished, I asked if any children in the audience would like to have a go at standing on *Splash*.

We had approximately eight kids who wanted a go, and also dressage rider Becky Morris from the dressage to music display.

Most of Squad B have never done anything in public before, so it was a great experience for them, and also a chance for the horses and Squad A to practice new moves before our first competition in June.

See video at www.talygarnec.co.uk/vaulting-videos/.

CHRIS ROGERS, Talygarn Vaulters.

'Dish out Dosh' panel recognises volunteers

Coun Gwyn John with the 'Dish out Dosh' panel.

ON March 7, the Vale Volunteer Bureau held its annual awards evening to celebrate the completion of six community projects conceived, managed, and funded by young volunteers from across the Vale.

Projects were funded via Dish Out Dosh, a 'Dragons Den' style panel entirely made up of young people who chose to divide the £10,000 between six projects ranging from a youth managed youth project run by Sully Youth Club, to a project at the 1148 Penarth Squadron.

Air Training Corps is designed to give young people the opportunity to promote the Training Corps, in a hope of recruiting more young volunteers.

During the evening young people showcased their achievements over the last eight months. It also provided us with the opportunity to formally present 24 young people with their Millennium Volunteer certificates, who between them have carried out over 1,200 hours of volunteering in the last few months.

A further eight young people were awarded with their Agored Cymru qualifications 'Volunteering and Community Involvement' level one and two.

This year the certificates were presented with help from Coun Gwyn John.

Katherine Davies, trustee for the Vale Volunteer Bureau said: "How lovely to publicly acknowledge the number of volunteering hours that have been achieved by young people. Well done to everyone involved in a very positive celebration of volunteering in practice".

Dish Out Dosh is currently looking for new panel members. For more information on getting involved or any aspect of volunteering, Millennium Volunteers and Agored Cymru Qualifications in the Vale contact Holly Williams Youth Volunteering Officer on 01446 421782 or holly@vvb.org.uk.

HW

Local roadworks

TEMPORARY traffic control: **A48 at Sycamore Cross junction between Bonvilston and St Nicholas; Port Road, Rhoose, near the Holiday Inn Hotel; Beach Road, Llantwit Major; Windsor Road, Penarth (near Dingle Park footway).**

New traffic lights and speed limit on A48

NEW traffic lights and a 40mph speed limit will face drivers on the A48 between Bonvilston and St Nicholas next week.

The new signals at Sycamore Cross will be switched on at 7am on Wednesday April 3.

A Vale Council spokesperson said that they had been installed under the MOVA signal control system, which uses vehicle sensors buried in the carriageway on the approach to the junction, and a computer to optimise the signal timings and improve traffic flow through the junction.

The Sycamore Cross scheme is funded by a grant from the Welsh Government and includes the construction and installation of new traffic islands, upgraded lighting, drainage and ducting, traffic signal equipment, new road signs, lining and extensive resurfacing of the carriageway.

"A 40mph speed limit has been implemented on the road and a new shared cycleway/ footway and toucan crossing facilities will increase safety for cyclists and pedestrians using the new junction," the spokesperson explained.

"The scheme designed by engineers from the council's highways and engineering division is intended to control traffic and improve highway safety at the junction with Five Mile Lane (A4226) and the unnamed road to Pendoylan.

"It will also improve access to key destinations, such as Cardiff Airport and Barry," the spokesperson added.

Search for Superstars!

This summer, Superstars in the Making and Memo Arts Centre, Barry, are searching for young people to perform in their hit musical production of *Grease*.

Following the successful run of Fame Jr. in August 2012 to sell-out audiences, the team are back and ready to showcase this West-End and Broadway mega-hit.

Already, hundreds of young people from all over south Wales have applied to audition for the performance, to work with director and producer, Christian Bullen.

Now the team are searching for young people based locally to audition and put talent from the Vale on the map!

There will be a workshop-based audition held for chorus next Wednesday, April 3 at The Memo Arts Centre from 3:30 pm– 4:30pm, open to performers aged between 10 and 30.

The performance of *Grease* will be staged on August 22-23 at the Memo Arts Centre.

Superstars in the Making has gained the rights to produce this musical from the USA and it is rarely available to perform! To apply to audition head to www.superstarsinthemaking.com or email superstars@radio.fm

'Global warming and a false political dogma'

LAST Thursday's GEM contained a plea from our MP Madeleine Moon that we all put our lights off for one hour on Saturday night, to demonstrate support for the WWF's Earth Hour, which claims that we "need more renewable energy to help protect our planet".

While Mrs Moon is to be admired for her support of recognisable good causes, I would challenge her opinions on the subject of so-called renewable energy.

She is not scientifically qualified in this field, but is motivated by the false political dogma that global warming is endangering Planet Earth, and can be cured by a massive expansion of wind energy.

In fact, the earth has warmed just 0.5 degrees over the past 50 years. Met Office records show that for the past 16 years, temperatures have remained steady.

At the end of last year the Met Office revised its ten-year forecast predicting a succession of years breaking records for warmth. It now says the pause in warming will last until at least 2017.

This does not accord with Mrs Moon's assertion that "Our reliance on high carbon fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas is overheating the atmosphere and affecting the climate".

She misses the fundamental point that fossil fuel and nuclear power stations are essential baseload suppliers of electricity. Wind energy is so unreliable that it needs 90 per cent back-up from those suppliers to avoid blackouts, and wind energy can only supplement, not replace, those sources.

People now have a choice whether they switch off their lights for Earth Hour, but if Mrs Moon and WWF had their way, we would be in darkness for most of the time without any choice.

Wind energy is not viable without massive subsidies hidden in our electricity bills, which add to fuel poverty. Wind turbines ruin our landscape and shorelines, and will certainly not affect the natural long-standing vagaries of our weather, which Mrs Moon would call climate change.

David Lewis, Porthcawl

Techniquest speaker wows the Rotarians!

RIGHT: Paul Williams, Dr Anita Jones and club president Ged Crosby.

AT the club's dining night, Dinas Powys Rotarians were delighted to welcome as their guest speaker, Dr Anita Shaw, the assistant CEO at Techniquest, the Welsh science and discovery centre in Cardiff Bay.

Less than seven weeks after it opened, Techniquest had welcomed its 10,000th visitor and In 1987, moved to a building opposite the now demolished Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum in Bute Street.

It moved again in 1995, about 100 metres along Stuart Street, to its present location on the site of a former engineering workshop, which is now its permanent headquarters. The building opened on May 2, 1995.

Techniquest takes exhibitions and programmes to special events at many venues around Wales, from shopping malls to major cultural events such as the National Eisteddfod.

It also offer comprehensive education services for schools, plus further activities through schemes such as Wales Gene Park, Maths Cymru, Science Café Wales and Teacher Science Network.

With the assistance of a few members Anita continued to entertain the assembled Rotarians with a range of hands-on experiences and simple experiments in science, much to the amusement of others in the room.

As with many charitable organisations, funding is always an issue and as an independent registered educational charity, Techniquest is funded from a variety of sources.

The Welsh Assembly Government provides approximately one third of the funding, particularly to support schools programmes. Admission charges help to meet operating costs, while grants and other earned income are also essential.

Techniquest is currently seeking £12m of capital funding to develop over the next five years, and along with a donation from Dinas Powys Rotary Club, hopes this will help it to continue entertaining the young (and the not so young) for many years.

The vote of thanks was given by Rotarian Paul Williams, who earlier had assisted Anita in a *not so* musical experiment – which was voted by all a very entertaining interlude!

SHADOWS CLUB

'Play or listen' on April 9 from 8pm in Penarth Conservative Club, Stanwell Road (02920 309979), when South Wales Shadows Club meets.

The Vale of Glamorgan Mayor's charity Big Band Concert with the Liberty Big Band, is on Saturday, April 27 at the Memorial Hall, Barry.

Tickets available from the mayor's office on 01446 709301 at £25 each (includes a chicken and chips supper).

All proceeds will go to Help for Heroes.

'I was Harry Secombe's stand-in' – says speaker

THE speaker at the Barry Men's Forum meeting last week, was Rosemary Scadden, who described her career as a programme researcher, in television, as the "best job in the world" which she enjoyed for over 30 years.

After first becoming a teacher, she worked mainly for HTV and later the BBC.

She highlighted the work ofiggers, make-up artists, designers, sound recordists, cameramen, floor managers, producers, directors, editors, vision mixers, and the members were also enlightened as to the function of the 'grips'.

An obscure title that often comes up on the credits, but whose work was a mystery to most, is the assistant to the cameraman – who ensures the latter is safe while having his eye glued the camera lens!

One of her proudest recollections was a series of programmes with then Speaker of the House of Commons, Lord Tonypandy, (George Thomas interviewing all the great politicians of the time including the Prime Minister.

She related her most embarrassing moment which was with Lord Tonypandy. The crew, after taking him out to lunch, piled into a taxi to go to the studio to make one of the recordings, and George Thomas, in his gentlemanly way insisted all the others got into the taxi first, which left him to sit on the fold down seat opposite Rosemary.

The taxi driver pulled out very sharply, throwing George sprawling on top of Rosemary.

When he admonished the driver, he quipped "the last time that happened in his taxi, there was a happy arrival nine months later".

She was involved in many other high profile programmes, and also spent eight years working on the religious programme 'Highway' with Harry Secombe, who she came to know very well. Her claim to being Harry Secombe's stand-in, came from her duties, during rehearsals, when she would act as Harry, for the cameras to be correctly positioned, when he came onto the set.

It was with regret that the chairman reported one of the longest serving members of the forum, Doug Grant, had passed away.

He also welcomed two new members Stan Griffiths, and Bob Griffiths. An invite is open to all to come along to the Barry Men's Forum at Windsor Road Church Hall every Thursday morning at 10.15am.

On Thursday, April 4, the speaker will be Colin Scott, whose talk is about the Western Welsh Bus company, and all enthusiasts for the old buses are invited to come along.

For further information, telephone 02920 594881. **PMW**

Out and About with The GEM

FERRIS ENTERTAINMENT

(GEM scholarship founder)

INSPIRES A GENERATION AT MAJOR FILM FESTIVAL

PETER FERRIS, who runs Ferris Entertainment Screen Acting and Film Master classes in Barry and Penarth, the first screen acting class to be set up in Wales 10 years ago, was not only a contributor, but also moderator/chairman of the film panel in *'Easy as…..1,2,3….Point, Shoot, Share,'* at the South by South West Film Festival in Austin, Texas.

Other film panelists included Danny Boyle and Will.i.am, and Peter's panel discussed the rise of new technology and the ability to shoot films on smartphones.

He commented: " I was very proud to be introduced as a 'maverick' and to talk about and show some of our films, but even prouder of the feedback, not only from the audience, but from my fellow panellists.

"My aim has always been to inspire people and empower people and Smartphone film making is the 'new punk'.

"We at Ferris Entertainment not only receive no funding, but alongside The Glamorgan GEM, we also give free scholarships to allow those with talent, but no money, to train or retrain to experience the film industry – and give them the chance of success in, film, TV and commercials.

"That is for all ages. – our youngest is 13 and our oldest is 60.

"However, the greatest excitement came from the news that Ferris Entertainment was soon to launch FerrisEntertainment.TV, a new internet channel where the 31 films and future films made at their master classes in Cardiff, Belfast, London, and soon launching in LA, would be available to view – after being entered in film festivals worldwide.

"We are leading the world in this new technology and intend to stay there. Other companies and training establishments will copy what we do, but they will always be behind.

"There are going to be other incredible announcements coming soon and, of course in Wales, The Glamorgan GEM will be the first to know, as they believed in us six years ago and saw the potential, when many other people were saying – as they still say. *'They can't do that!'.*

"Well done to all the incredible people at The GEM, who realised immediately that, like them, "we were here to help other people", whereas so many other establishments were only here to help themselves," Mr Ferris concluded.

PARK FUN

BANK holiday events taking place at Porthkerry Park, Barry, include an Easter Egg trail on March 29 to April 7, at 10.30am-3.30pm, and a children's art session from 2pm to 4pm on April 3.

Artists sought for Heritage exhibition

ARTISTS are being sought for an exhibition celebrating the Glamorgan Heritage Coast at St Donat's arts centre during May.

A spokesperson said: "Artists must have work ready to exhibit. We welcome all expressive arts disciplines, from visual, performing, digital, crafts, photographers, potters, painters, weavers, actors, dancers, musicians, digital media art, literature and more... so please get in touch,"

The exhibition forms part of a wider project to raise the profile of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast and is headed by Creative Rural Communities, the Vale Council's Rural Regeneration team.

Artists wishing to participate in the Glamorgan Heritage Coast exhibition, or wanting to learn more about the Vale Arts Exchange, should contact 01446 704707 or email artinthevale@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk by noon on Friday, April 19.

Selection for the exhibition will be made by a small independent panel.

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Ystradowen - Nr. Cowbridge
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5.30pm & 7.30pm
Severn Avenue
Wiggy - 07515 824988
Penarth
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Elfed Avenue United Church, Elfed Avenue
Nia - 07793 885581
TUESDAY
Barry - 5.30pm
Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, Trinity Street
Joanne - 01446 404897
Llantwit Major
9.30am
Catholic Church, Ham Lane East
Helen - 01446 750738
Barry RFC
7.30pm
Merthyr Dyfan Road
Teresa - 07889 828401
Llantwit Major
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Our Lady & St Illtyd Church (Catholic)
Ham Lane East
Helen - 01446 750738
Sully - 6.30pm
The Old School
South Road
Niki - 01446 740394
WEDNESDAY
Barry
4.45 & 6.45pm
St. Francis Millennium Centre, Park Road, Porth-y-Castell
Annamarie - 01446 736534
Barry - 6.00pm
Cadoxton Methodist Church
Church Road
Joanne - 01446 404897
Penarth
9.30am & 11.30am
All Saints Church Hall
Victoria Square
Tracy - 07894 275853
Penarth
5.30pm & 7.30pm
All Saints Church Hall
Victoria Square
Tracy - 07894 275853
THURSDAY
Barry - 5.30pm
Highlight Park Community Centre, Barry
Annamarie - 01446 736534
Cowbridge - 9.30am
Cowbridge Rugby Club
Rob - 07708 941279
Dinas Powys
5.30pm & 7.30pm
The Cabin by swimming pool, Hebron Hall
Sarah - 07525852288
Barry - 10.15am
St Helen's Church Hall
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Out and About with The GEM

College students put on their own 'rock opera'

ABOVE:
The students are ready to rock at Bridgend College.
Picture by RANDELL JOHN (www.randelljohnphotography.com or 01656 662324)
(See next week's GEM for more photos).

STUDENTS at Bridgend College have written and produced their own 'rock opera' – and the final performance is being staged this evening (Thursday) in the Sony Theatre.

The show, entitled The Heavy Handed Handsome Headless Horseman, features original music, written by the students.

All profits will go back into future college productions.

For tickets (£4) and more details, call 01656 302381, or 07931 009425

WHAT'S ON IN YOUR AREA / *in brief*

Special services

THIS Easter, All Saints Church in Victoria Square, Penarth, is holding a number of special services.

On Good Friday, there is a short children's service from 10am to 3pm.

On Easter Saturday at 7pm,there will be a Vigil service.

Services on Easter Sunday are as follows: Holy Communion at 8am, a family celebration Communion at 3.30pm at St Peter's, Old Cogan, and Easter Evensong at 6pm.

All are welcome – for more information, visit *www.allsaintspenarth.org.uk*

Easter at Holy Trinity

SERVICES at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, Barry, at Easter are: Maundy Thursday, March 28, at 7pm; Good Friday, March 29, at 10am; Easter Sunday, March 31, at 11am and 6pm.

All of these services will be conducted by Rev Duncan Ballantyne.

The church is situated at the junction of Aberystwyth Crescent and Trinity Street.

Walk of Witness

ON Good Friday, all the Churches of Barry lead the Christian 'Walk of Witness' departing from the Parade Gardens at 12 noon with a service on King Square at 2pm.

The story of the Passion is told at Merthyr Dyfan Church at 10am and St Paul's at 3.15pm.

On Holy Saturday (March 30), the first Mass of Easter will be held at St Cadocs Church, Cadoxton. Sunday's services to celebrate Easter Day are 8.45am at Merthyr Dyfan Church and 10am at St Paul's.

Coffee morning

A COFFEE morning will be held at Llantwit Major Bowls Club on Saturday (March 30), 10am–12pm. Entrance is £3 to include tea/coffee with a free top up and biscuit, book stall, cake stall, raffle.

Hangfire gig

SOUTH WALES southern rockers Hangfire's first live date of 2013 is this Saturday at the Barry West End Club.

Bassist Bob Goo (Rob Gough) will be bringing the TBFM Online Factor winners back to his home town with a busy summer of festivals.

Hangfire are signed by Ripple Music, based in California, and are currently writing their second album, to follow on from the well-reviewed debut album 'Shoot the Crow'.

The support group for the evening will be Blackbyrd.

You can get your ticket from any Spar store in Barry, or at the Barry West End Club for £3 (£5 on the door), or online at *www.ticketsource.co.uk.*

Beach treasure hunt

AS part of its 50th year celebrations, the Llantwit Major Surf Life Saving Club is holding a treasure hunt at Llantwit Major beach on Easter Monday, April 1, between 1.30 pm-4 pm.

Lucky finders of pirates' buried golden nuggets will be able to exchange them for prizes in the clubhouse! Entry fee is £1.

The club is marking its also 50th birthday with a glittering black tie dinner dance at MoD St Athan on September 28.

For further information, email: lmslsc-social@hotmail.com.

Will she be the Belle of your ball?

The GEM is in partnership with the Dog's Trust to find caring homes for animals in their charge at Bridgend Rehoming Centre (Telephone: 01656 725219)

BELLE is a six-year-old Westie. She has been our resident sponsor dog for a few years, but she has done so well in her training that we now feel she is ready to find a loving home.

She is a complex little character – very intelligent, but sensitive with it. She is very quick to learn and is never happier than when she is learning a new trick. We are appealing for someone local to offer her a home, so that they can make regular visits for a few weeks before taking her home to make sure she is really settled and bonded with her new owners.

Belle is a firm favourite at the centre, and will make a very rewarding companion for someone special.

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LUCKY FOR SOME AS VALE RAMBLERS TAKE ICY STROLL!

THIRTEEN Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers braved the cold wind to join Judy and Michael's walk behind Margam Park on Sunday, March 24.

The walk set off from Margam Abbey and went up the hills behind the park to join the Coed Morgannwg Way, and then looped back through the deer park.

The biting wind meant that coffee and lunch stops were kept short, but the walk had a variety of interesting paths with good views, if a bit hazy. The walk finished with a pretty path through Margam Park back to the cars.

As well as the walks that are offered on a Sunday, the Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers have been offering short walks during the week, including local churches and learning about the history of the area.

These walks have been very popular, they are between three and five miles long. The next weekday walk is being held on April 7, meeting at Penmark Church, and walking to the Llantrithyd Church, before heading back to Penmark.

Our last March walk will take place on Easter Sunday, meeting at 9.30 BST at Cogan Railway Station, then catching the train into Cardiff Central. From there, the walk will pick up the Taff Trail down to the Bay; after lunch, the group will take the boat over to the Barrage, before walking back to pick up the cars in Cogan Station.

Further information on the website – valeofglamorganramblers.co.uk.

Gwenda Fitzpatrick

Mr Williams mixes his 'extreme reading' with some extreme cooking.

World Book Day laughs at Barry Comprehensive

EVERY year, as part of World Book Day celebrations, the school's English department runs its 'extreme reading' competition.

This involves reading in unusual places, and entries were numerous and varied – as usual.

The winners were announced as Dylan Stanger (7JEV) for the pupils, and Mr Williams (PE department) for the staff.

World Book Day also marked the close of the annual Readathon challenge which involves year-7 pupils reading six books in just six weeks; £360 was raised by the 70 boys who completed the challenge as part of their independent learning.

The money raised will go to CLIC Sargent, the children's cancer charity, as well as earning tokens for more books in school.

World Book Day also saw staff from all sorts of departments beginning their lessons by reading extracts from their favourite books – to show pupils that it's not just English teachers who enjoy reading!

Pupils learn about Amazon rainforest

PUPILS at Oak Field School, who were recently awarded eco-school status, have been learning about the importance of the Amazon rainforest.

Coun Rob Curtis sponsored an art competition in which pupils were asked to paint or draw an Amazonian bird.

In the process, pupils have learnt that the continuing destruction of the Amazon rainforest could have a negative effect on the World's climate.

Coun Curtis said: "This could lead to unstable climate patterns and flooding events like the one Oakfield School experienced in 2007.

"I am extremely proud of all the pupils who worked so hard to produce work of such a high standard."

Pupils were in fancy dress to celebrate Red Nose day.

The winners were: First: Kelsey Evans, second: Miah Margetts, third: Ella Phillips, fourth: Brandon Phillips, fifth: Tiah Williams, sixth: Neveah Storm, seventh: Libby-Jae Robson.

ABOVE: First prize went to Kelsey Evans.

Miah Margetts.

Ella Phillips.

Airport fundraisers' £20,000 for charities

STAFF and passengers at Cardiff Airport last year raised more than £20,000 for local charities.

Collection tins were left in the terminal for passengers to donate.

Volunteers also collected money at the airport during peak times, often starting at 4am.

Airport staff also took part in and organised a number of fundraising events for charities, including the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, which raised nearly £8,000 over the year.

Other charities to benefit from fundraising at the airport included Cancer Research UK, Ty Hafan, Macmillan Cancer Support and The Christian Lewis Trust.

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Creevy's Punch fails to connect properly

ERAN Creevy's debut film, *Shifty*, was a strong opening salvo from the British director; the tale of a drug dealer and his old friend was a superb piece of work announcing a new homegrown talent.

Creevy's follow-up is a more ambitious effort, however, with *Welcome To The Punch*, a crime thriller that sees James McAvoy's detective Max Lewinsky go after Mark Strong's Jacob Sternwood (a bank robber who escaped from Max three years previously) when he comes back to London after his son is shot.

However as Max's obsession with Jacob takes hold, events conspire that see the two of them become embroiled in something much bigger than they thought...

Eran Creevy is obviously a big fan of Michael Mann, particularly *Heat* as *Welcome To The Punch* shares many of Mann's stylistic tics, and pays particular homage to the crime thriller that is perhaps the best example of the genre to hit the big screen.

While Creevy's ambition can't be faulted, its similarities to *Heat*, and a lacklustre story, mean that this is one *Punch* that fails to land a knockout blow; instead it is a solidly-made piece that, come the end credits, just feels somewhat underwhelming.

Visually, the film is incredible, the city of London never having been shot with such beauty and clarity before. The steely hues will be more than familiar to Mann fans, but Creevy couldn't have picked a better example to base the film's visual stylings on and it pays off immensely here, the slick look and feel showing a visual ambition that very few British films aim for, and even fewer pull off.

Even the gun shootouts are delivered with an intense, balletic feel that lend themselves to a bigger budget American film, and Creevy deserve plaudits for showing how strong a visual director he is, particularly as *Shifty* was a film that didn't rely on its visuals.

But while the American taste lingers with the direction, it doesn't leave a particularly palatable one with the script, the dialogue often being delivered in bite-sized chunks that would sound a lot better being delivered with an American accent rather than a British one.

The story offers nothing new, feeling hackneyed and all too predictable, and even a late swerve is the sort of twist that comes from predictability rather than necessity. While the film looks amazing, the story just doesn't match up to it.

Pairing two of the finest British exports of recent years in the lead roles doesn't do your film any harm, and both McAvoy and Strong are as dependable and impressive as you would expect.

Their characters aren't the freshest in the world, and neither are their motivations (mirroring the Hanna/McCauley relationship in *Heat*), but the pair travel a well-worn path with no little skill.

There's dependable support from the likes of Peter Mullan, Andrea Riseborough, Daniel Mays and David Morrisey, but it's Johnny Harris, as a psychotic ex-soldier integral to the pair's story, who stands out most in the support cast.

Perhaps the success of his debut has strangled Creevy's own voice, but *Welcome To The Punch* is a very lacklustre follow-up; too indebted to its influences with a script that just doesn't come alive. The ambition and visual style shown is impressive - but the execution is not.

by GARETH JAMIESON

Follow Screen Talk on Twitter - @GEMScreenTalk

VERDICT - If Eran Creevy's debut feature was fresh and exciting, then *Welcome To The Punch* is worn and lively. The film looks so good, but under the stylish visuals lies an average, and all-too-familiar, screenplay. Decent performances just about cover the script's cracks, but it is a disappointing effort from the writer/director.

Average.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *Heat* (1995), *Layer Cake* (2004)

Penarth Computer Club – Learning about Black Boxes

THE 'Black Box' of the computer is a mystery to lots of people who are interested only in using a mouse or keyboard to get the desired result; like the engine in a car or the inside of a television, what happens inside the box is of no interest so long as it works.

So far, so good; there is no danger of confusion between a car, a TV or a computer. Alas, times are changing. More people are using several computers at home and need to link them together for convenience.

This makes sense because all the computers can then talk to a single printer or use the same gateway to the internet. That they can also talk to each other means that files can be backed up easily to a central storage device or onto another computer. They can be linked by cable or wirelessly to form a home network.

To control the traffic another black box is necessary and could be a hub, a switch or a router. Because they form the links in a network and seem to do the same sort of thing the names are sometimes (wrongly) used interchangeably. These black boxes are all communication devices, but they have different levels of ability.

A Google search will quickly turn up lots of information and use words like Eprotocols, and EIP addresses. That's fine if you feel you need to know all that stuff, but the distinction can be put into simple terms.

A hub is the simplest. A hub will take a signal from any device capable of sending it and forward it to all other devices connected to it. If it gets a reply from any device, it will also send the reply to all other devices connected to it.

A switch will start like a hub, but immediately learn the identities assigned automatically to each device. Signals carry information about the originating device and any response will be forwarded to the appropriate device only. That reduces traffic and makes the network more efficient.

A router is a more complex beast. It notes the source of a signal it receives from the home network, but forwards the signal to the internet as if it was the originator, using its own address. It adds to each signal a code unique to that signal. If the code is contained in a response signal from elsewhere, the router remembers which device on the local network initiated the original signal and routes the response accordingly.

Any unwanted incoming signal such as spam cannot contain such a unique code and cannot be passed to anywhere on the local network. This security is referred to as a Firewall.

As a network grows a dedicated computer can be added as a server to handle it all – a bigger Black Box.

The next meeting is on Tuesday April 9 at All Saints Lesser Hall, Victoria Square, Penarth 7.30pm for 8pm. Mike J will explore genealogy. See our website at penarthcomputerclub.co.uk.

HOWARD DESMOND

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number 767.

● **£2,000: 938709**.

● **The rollover, which now stands at £10,500, was not won this week.**

● **£10:** 7 7 1 5 5 4 , 852522, 685137, 168353, 531477, 594328, 774250, 966597, 903774, 958683, 783084, 596358, 885759, 523875, 302577, 177781, 639078, 898171, 398857, 713832.

● **£5:** 778165, 660018, 123387, 866581, 238017, 678387, 214325, 116145, 847242, 471940, 896408, 535140, 293029, 478342, 120296, 965154, 860980, 892283, 722621, 162021, 432561, 864023, 442126, 138319, 666448, 764681, 527924, 477902, 299264, 876066, 230869, 549429, 572630, 806562, 497829, 736738, 661223, 917492, 195908, 869529, 595637, 199871, 483668, 464545, 579726, 444578, 563512, 173331, 773514, 241419, 259928, 732837, 562115, 755438, 750357, 679571, 603109, 781240.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

TALENTED YOUNG SOLOISTS IN VALE SPRING CONCERT

THE spring concert by Cerddorfa Dinas Powys Orchestra took place on March 17 to a packed and very appreciative audience in The Parish Hall, Dinas Powys.

The orchestra performed Mendelssohn Overture *Fingals Cave* and Schumann *Symphony No. 4 in D Minor* in the first half of the programme.

However, the stars of the evening were undoubtedly the three young soloists, Rosalind Phang, piano; Juliette Roos, violin and Ben Tarlton, cello, performing by kind permission of The Yehudi Menuhin School and playing Beethoven's *Triple Concerto for piano, violin, cello and orchestra*.

They are all only 17 years of age and yet their performance was masterful. Full of confidence and poise and giving every indication of their future careers as successful soloists.

Ben lives in Llantwit Major and at the Yehudi Menuhin School in January 2011. Ben's parents have successful musical careers and his father, Antony Tarlton, is musical director of the orchestra.

This is his 20th year 'in charge' and the concert was a fitting tribute to his dedication and careful guidance during this time, which is much appreciated by all the members of the orchestra.

The orchestra leader, Kay Marshall, is made up of dedicated amateur musicians from Cardiff and the Vale and performs two concerts each year, just before Easter and also in early December.

To keep up to date with forthcoming events and for further details about the orchestra, visit the web site at www.cdpo.org.uk. **MD**

BARRY TOURIST RAILWAY

THE museum on Barry Tourist Railway's Barry Island Station, will be open on Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

The Barry Tourist Railway will come to life over the Easter weekend as vintage trains operate between the station and Barry Waterfront.

Every child riding on the trains will receive a free chocolate bunny, with special family rates available.

Full details at www.barrytouristrailway.co.uk or telephone 01446 748816.

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NEWS FROM PENARTH & DISTRICT RAMBLERS

Spring in the step on a stroll

ELEVEN walkers, including leader William, journeyed up to Usk (in Welsh, Brynbuga, which means Buga's Hill) where the Norman castle above the river and the surrounding town are believed to have been founded by 1120.

The castle was the centre for almost constant battles between the Welsh and the English and, following the Battle of Usk in 1405, when the English forces chased the Welsh across the river for the last time, with great loss of life, the town had to be rebuilt

On the east bank of the Usk the early frost was melting as the sun shone, Passing the restored white windmill at Llancayo, they followed a natural bend in the river to reach the Llancayo solar panel farm, which covers a 32-acre site set behind hedgerows, generating electricity from daylight all year round.

Heading uphill through meadows they enjoyed morning coffee in Ash Wood, before joining a lane that led to Hill Farm.

From this point, there were stunning views of the Black mountains bathed in sunlight.

Skilfully avoiding the attentions of some over zealous ponies, they descended into a wondrous green valley to admire the church dedicated to St Aeddan, with its beautiful carved rood screen and three gigantic yew trees adorning the churchyard.

They are poisonous, except for their red berries – which attract birds, and in Roman times the yew was used as an antidote for adder bites.

The largest yew with a 30-foot girth is believed to be over 2,000 years old and inside the decaying hollow centre is a new stem growing and regenerating a new trunk to keep this ancient tree alive.

A bridge has stood at Pont Kemeys since the 16th century, but was destroyed in 1690 by floods.

A solid oak structure replaced it in 1730 before in 1829, it was replaced by an iron bridge supported by sturdy chains that could withstand horses, carts and vehicles crossing.

The present bridge, with its green painted girders, is under threat from corrosion, but is still known as the Chain Bridge .

Crossing over to join part of the Usk Valley Walk on the west bank, they stopped for a quick lunch as the weather started to deteriorate.

The sunshine returned as fields, woodland paths and quiet roads, the banks of which were bedecked with daffodils, snow drops and celandine, eventually led them back to the old stone bridge which crosses the River Usk.

After a delightful 11-and-a-half mile walk in almost spring like conditions, they prepared for the journey home.

On Saturday, March 30, the group will be celebrating their 20th anniversary with a rural 10-mile moderate walk in the Usk valley, taking in the villages of Tredunnock and Llanhennock – leaving Cogan Leisure Centre at 9am. Contact Joy on 01446 737131.

Opening the new programme on Easter Monday (April 1) meet at 9.30am at Cogan for a 9.5-mile mod/hard walk to Sugar Loaf, which features some rough walking; contact Robin on 029 2051 4051.

JOY STRANGWARD

Spring, a time for Easter bunnies, black hounds...

and fearsome riders on goats!

SPOOKY TALES by Hayley Williams

SPRING is one of the pleasurable seasons of the year, as it breaks the transition between the winter and summer.

It lasts for three months from March to May, and is an indication that nature is preparing for new beginnings, when animals and insects re-emerge from hibernation and birds raise their young. Plants, flowers and trees begin their rebirth, too.

Spring is a varied season, as throughout the world it is dependent on local climate and time zones.

The spring equinox on March 21 has been declared as the first day of this welcome season, and the noticeable increase in hours of daylight and a rise in temperature are all significant because of the earth's tilt of 23.5 on its axis towards the sun, as well as more prominent tidal currents.

In more recent times, earlier appearances of spring have occurred, with rising temperatures during the winter months, sending nature into confusion.

Also known as the vernal equinox, which falls between March 19-21, the spring equinox (which means equal night in Latin), was originally introduced by the Romans, who used the lunar calendar to predict the spring season, as they realised that both day and night were 12 hours long.

But it was Julius Caesar who reformed the festival to the solar calendar, declaring the date of the equinox to be March 25, with 365 days in the year ahead and a day extra every four years.

In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII changed the date back to March 21, because March and April were known for their connections with religious festivals.

The main celebration during springtime is Easter, which is thought to derive from pagan, Hebrew and Christian traditions.

Eggs portray signs of new life, and they became traditionally eaten at Easter, taken from the German word Eostre.

Eggs were forbidden to be consumed during the 40 days of Lent, where fasting and omitting dairy products from the diet was essential.

It was customary to present friends with red coloured eggs while chanting Easter greetings. Red symbolised the blood shed by Jesus during his crucifixion.

Ancient traditions surrounding the spring equinox and Easter include Morris dancing, performed on Easter Sunday to banish the evil spirits of winter.

Another favourite custom was performed on Easter Monday and Tuesday. Named 'lifting and heaving', it required young men to visit houses in their neighbourhood carrying a chair decorated with flowers.

They would encourage girls or ladies to sit upon the chair, and the men would lift the female three times into the air as a sign of good luck for the year ahead.

The following day, the opposite was performed where the ladies would tend to the duties of the chair lifting.

The fable of freshly-baked bread, made on Good Friday and handed to sailors on ships about to set off on the high seas, was believed to bring good luck for the voyage ahead.

The eerie occurrence of dancing white waves appearing in the vicinity of Nash Point around Easter time have been seen.

Witnesses have described them as 'Merry dances' when deceased sailors seemed to ride on the crest of the wave as if on horseback.

But could these ghostly images be an indication that the departed are still lurking on the seas where they met their end, or just a trick of the imagination?

An intriguing legend of folklore involves spring-heeled Jack.

Thought to have lived during the Victorian era, he would perform giant leaps into the air at night. He was believed to be tall and thin, wearing a black cloak.

He had clawed hands with his eyes resembling red balls of fire, breathing out blue and white flames before disappearing into the night.

The ghost of the Easter bunny is full of intrigue, as it is said to only appear once a year – on Easter Sunday. Catching a glimpse of this special ghost is said to bring good luck for the year ahead.

Woodland areas are particularly haunted around the time of Easter, where wild hunts were traditional.

Black hounds are said to prowl the dense forest ,accompanied by fearsome riders on the backs of horses and goats.

But why would these alarming images want to lurk around areas likely to be unrecognisable to them in today's society?

The coastline around Britain also has its ghostly tales where mermaids are said to ring bells hidden beneath the waters of our shores.

Witnesses to this spectacle are thought to gain a long-lasting and fruitful life... But could these tales be a matter of folklore, passed down through the generations of time?

Fact or Fiction? Only you can decide...

Hayley Williams
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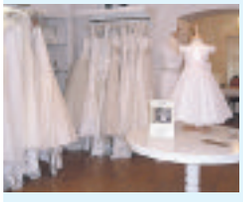

COWBRIDGE

So much to see...

COWBRIDGE BALANCES KEEPING THE OLD WITH ENCOURAGING THE NEW!

by PHILIP IRWIN

WHENEVER The GEM looks at an area such as Cowbridge at this time of year, the theme tends to include the arrival of spring, the onset of warmer weather, the prospect of more daylight as the clocks go forward, and changes that have taken place in the town over the last year.

Well, after the last few weeks, it's probably best to hold fire on the weather and the arrival of spring!

We can, however, rely on the clocks going forward (*that will be in the early hours of March 31*) – and we can also rely on changes in Cowbridge, because the town has definitely not rested on its laurels in recent years.

At a time when many areas bemoan the lack of any worthwhile investment – after all, money is tight – Cowbridge still manages to make things happen.

Visit some towns and things look the same as they did 10 years ago. Visit Cowbridge and you get the sense of an evolving town where various interests – voluntary groups and business interests in particular – are constantly refining and improving the environment.

Of course, attracting investment is easier if the town is an attractive place to visit and to live in, and Cowbridge was recently listed by the Sunday Times as one of the 'Top 10' places to live in Wales.

This reputation means that land in the town is snapped up, and Taylor Wimpey recently bought the site where the Cowbridge Comprehensive Lower School used to be.

The development, named 'Scholars' View' in a nod to its past, is now well under way, and is attracting a great deal of interest.

This will be the second development based on Cowbridge's old school history. It is only a few years ago that Centregreat bought the former Cowbridge Grammar School building and turned it into high-quality apartments, and all the signs are that the latest development will be of similar quality.

Of course, the biggest investment in the town in the last six months or so has been the arrival of Waitrose, who moved into a purpose-built unit on the site of the old Hurrans garden centre.

The food store occupies a distinctive part of the retail sector, and it has definitely attracted visitors from neighbouring towns – in particular, Porthcawl and Bridgend – using the two hours free parking to visit the store and take a look around the town.

It is early days, of course, and too soon to assess the long-term effect of this change to the retail environment, but it has certainly given new visitors the chance to see that the town has a very distinctive range of shops, the vast majority owner managed, and built on the dual concepts of personal service and product lines that offer something different from the chain stores.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

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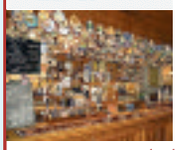
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So much to see . . .

COMMUNITY SPIRIT IS THE DRIVING FORCE IN TOWN

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

Fashion retailer Mark Jones is a classic example of a retailer who has found that Cowbridge is a great place to do business.

Three years ago, he opened E 91, very much a 'fashion forward' boutique, with the accent on showcasing garments that were not available anywhere else in south Wales.

Within a year, he found that a 'slightly older' clientele were asking for a similar choice of outfits, particularly for weddings and special occasions, and so he opened 'E 91 Classic' just down the road.

Mark said: "We chose Cowbridge rather than Cardiff, for instance, because it is easier to give the type of service we want to here.

"We get to know our customers, they tell us what events are on the horizon, and we can let them know what we have coming in, and in which of the two shops they will find it."

He has mothers and daughters among his customers, and a number of customers who travel from London, west Wales and the West Country because they prefer the ambience in Cowbridge.

Alun John is the chairman of the Cowbridge Chamber of Trade, and he feels that the next 12 months is important to the future of the town.

He said: "There is no doubt that what makes Cowbridge a unique place to shop is the lack of chain stores, and I would urge everyone to support the independent traders.

"Clearly, customers can show their support by visiting the shops and taking note of what is on offer. Also, I would urge landlords to take a longer-term view of Cowbridge, when setting their rents, so that the town can protect its reputation as a shopping centre that has a wide variety of 'niche' shops."

Voluntary groups play a big part in Cowbridge, not just by putting on events but by adding to the amenities and the social fabric of the town.

The Cowbridge and Llantwit Major Lions have stepped up to the plate this year by reviving the May Fayre – an old country tradition that faded away some years ago.

It will be back this year, however,at the Bear Field on May 6.

GREAT SUCCESS

Other voluntary groups – and there are several – put their time and expertise to improving the town by reviving neglected areas, and in recent years they have had great success.

The Cowbridge Physic Garden Trust succeeded in gaining Lottery cash to convert an overgrown area into a geometric garden, featuring flowers and plants used by physicians several hundred years ago.

It is an established tourist attraction now, and a great place to stop and read or have a break – when the weather improves..

Similarly, the Old Hall Gardens Trust, through a combination of grant aid and volunteers' efforts, has overseen a transformation of an area that is, after all, just off the main street.

Holy Cross Church – a beautiful building in its own right – has recently completed a re-design, to make it a more flexible space that can be used for community events.

Another trust, this time the Cowbridge Charter Trust, has been busy in recent years reclaiming the historic town walls and these are now restored and on public view.

They are still on the case, though, and the next stage of their work will see old cattle sheds knocked down, revealing more of the walls, and creating extra parking spaces as well!

Cowbridge's strengths are well known. The alley ways and courtyards, rich in history and dotted with businesses that offer something special are an established plus point.

Similarly, the range of options where you can stop for a coffee, a drink, a pub meal, a sandwich or tapas, or a restaurant meal, are well known to the town's residents and regular visitors.

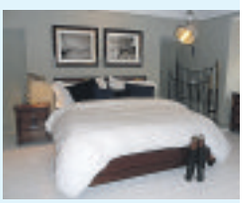
What makes Cowbridge different, however, is the constant striving to improve the town.

Some towns have plenty of organisations that "want to keep things as they are" and who will write to the papers opposing just about everything.

Cowbridge's organisations are different because, while they will band together to protect things that are valued in the town – just look at last year's protests to save the livestock market – they also spend time on finding ways to improve the town.

Long may it continue!

COWBRIDGE



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STAGECOACH STUDENTS DO THEIR BIT FOR RED NOSE DAY

STAGECOACH Theatre Arts in Cowbridge have enjoyed a fantastic term, with great drama, dance and singing sessions, rehearsals, auditions, filming opportunities, presentations and awards.

Students also dressed up in fancy dress for Red Nose Day, and raised a fantastic £272.54!

They are enrolling now for the summer term and holiday workshops, so for more information, telephone Helene and Rob on 01446 781454.

EASTER CRAFT HOUR

A children's store in Cowbridge will be raising cash for Ty Hafan with a craft hour and Easter egg hunt this Saturday (March 30).

Daisy and Jack's will be showing children how to make Easter decorations and doing glitter tattoos and face painting, starting at 11am.

The Easter hunt starts at 12 noon. The cost is £10, places must be pre-booked, and all profits will go to the Ty Hafan hospice.

For more information, telephone 01446 772133 or e-mail info@daisyandjack.co.uk

Orchestra's concert

THE Rhondda Symphony Orchestra will be perorming a concert in the beautiful setting of Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge, on April 13, at 7.30pm.

The programme includes Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suites 1 and 2*, and Schumann's *Symphony No 1*.

The orchestra, conducted by Donal Bannister, will also play Simon Wills' *Truffaldino*, which is based on the music of Scarlatti.

Tickets are £10, but under-18s are free. For further details, telephone 01443 650412.

ABOVE: The Stagecoach pupils get dressed up for Red Nose Day.

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Cowbridge church's Palm Sunday tradition

The Cross leads the procession on its way from the town hall to Holy Cross Church.

PHOTOGRAPH by MIKE WILCOCK.

CHURCHES Together in Cowbridge braved the biting winds on Palm Sunday for the traditional procession, which was followed by an ecumenical service.

The procession assembled at the town hall, and made its way to Holy Cross Church in time for the service.

Easter services will continue this weekend. Tomorrow (Friday) there will be a Liturgy of the Passion and Holy Communion at noon at Holy Cross Church.

At 3pm, there will be a performance of Stainer's 'The Crucifixion' at Llanblethian Church (admission free).

On easter Saturday, there will be a Taize Vigil and first Eucharist at Ystradowen.

Easter Sunday services start at 6am with a 'Son Rise Eucharist at Llanfrynach, and an 8am Eucharist at Holy Cross.

At 9.15am, there will be eucharists at Llanblethian, Llandough, Penllyn and St Mary Church, and at 11am, there will be eucharists at Flemingston, Llansannor, Ystradowen, St Hilary and Holy Cross.

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BONNETS, EGGS AND AN ICE CREAM HAT FOR EASTER!

The end of term at All Saints Church in Wales Primary School was celebrated in the usual way, with a colourful Easter bonnet parade.

Children posed, class by class, in their crafted creations and the judges had a really challenging task.

Three winners were chosen from each class and they were presented with certificates and chocolate Easter eggs provided by the parents and friends association.

There was an amazing array of original ideas and year-6 teacher, Mr Ball, thought the ice cream hat was good enough to eat!

Headteacher, Richard Ware, praised the children for their enthusiastic participation and wished everyone a happy Easter.

LM

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Miss Wales finalist's fundraising appeal

A former member of 10th Barry Guides, Rachel Peters (pictured right), is asking local residents to support a charity fundraising effort.

Rachel (17) said: "As a Miss Wales 2013 finalist, I am fund-raising for Bobath Wales, on March 30 with a table top sale in aid of 10th Barry Guides. It starts at 9.30am, at the Guide Hall on top of Romilly Road (opposite Romilly School).

"I hope everyone can come, all the money goes to Bobath, such a great cause!

"Free entry, cakes, coffee and much more" she added.

Local band launches EP

ON March 30 at 7 pm local band called 'Back to November' has its official EP Launch in the Glamorgan Suite at Barry Memorial Hall.

The band's EP *Without Reason* will be available on iTunes from March 30.

"We have been together for just over a year now and have been recording for the past few months. The EP consists of 4 tracks: 1. Falling (original) 2. I Won't Give Up (cover) 3. Hazel Eyes (original) 4. Tickle Tears (original)" said band spokesman Edan Edwards.

The event starts at 7pm and tickets can be bought via the Memo website for £6. check Memo website for details.

What's on, and where?

Art show

AN exhibition of local artist Gary Hamer Rees's latest oil paintings continues at Llanerch Vineyard, Hensol, Vale of Glamorgan.

Diggers wanted!

VOLUNTEERS are needed on April 8 to dig over planting area to help Llanblethian Community Group create a Diamond Jubilee feature for the 2013 Best Kept Village competition.

Digging will take about three to four hours for two to three volunteers.

Contact Mike (01446 773583), Rebecca (01446 773264), Arthur (01446 772995), Chris (01446 775020) or Beverly (01446 772704) to volunteer.

Spring concert at Ramoth

A SPRING concert by Con Voce will take place at Ramoth Church, Cowbridge.

'April Shower', an evening of music, is on Friday, April 12, at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £5, and available from Mrs Mavis Ashford or church members.

All proceeds will go to Bible society and church funds.

FoE meets

BARRY and Vale FoE will meet on April 2, to consider the Local Groups' Conference being held in Hebron Hall, Dinas Powys, from April 26-28.

The group will be pushing for a green belt in the Vale LDP, to stop further greenfield development, from Porthkerry to Barry Woods and from Wenvoe to Sully.

It will be inviting local politicians to discuss energy, Hinckley Point nuclear power and the barrage, or sustainable green energy, at their meeting on May 7.

VETERANS' ARCTIC STAR MEDALS

THIS week at last saw the first Arctic Star medals awarded in a presentation ceremony at 10, Downing Street, followed by a reception at *HMS Belfast*.

Veterans, including local men who have long fought for an Arctic Convoy medal, were finally honoured in a ceremony for the survivors to receive the Arctic Star.

No-one had medals in mind as the months of March in World War Two went on, though there were further losses of local men, paid tribute to on the local Vale of Glamorgan Merchant Navy monument in Barry and on the Roll of Honour.

Many ships sailed from Barry Docks to join convoys: March 1943, in particular, was an important month as it had seen the U-boat offensive reach its peak, with a series of major convoy battles, first around convoys HX 228, SC 121, and UGS 6, then followed the battle for HX229/SC122, the largest convoy battle of the war.

To mark the historic 70th anniversary, the Merchant Navy and the Royal Navy are to join in marking what may be the final commemoration of the Battle of the Atlantic in May this year.

The date has been chosen because it was during 1943 that the tide began to turn, and although German submarines rejoined battle later that year, and fought to the bitter end, they never again posed such a threat to Britain's maritime life-lines.

But the cost of keeping the nation's supply routes open was fearful: over 36,000 merchant seamen lost their lives and 5,000 ships were sunk.

The toll for the months of March in the early war years: (the names, where possible of local men, are shown in brackets with each ship's report).

March 14, 1941 saw the cargo ship *Herport* loaded with a cargo of coal detonate a mine off East Anglia and sink with the loss of four crew (John Daly).

On March 18, 1941, the *SS. Medjerda* was torpedoed by U-105. She broke in two pieces; being heavily loaded, the ship took only 30 seconds to sink. The master, two gunners and 51 crew were lost (Arthur Lye).

The steamship *Stanleigh,* in convoy off Liverpool Bay on March 27, 1941, was attacked at night by German aircraft. She soon sank, rolling so that she destroyed one of her boats full of men; six men survived on a raft (oil barrels and planks) being picked up after a day afloat (Thomas J Richards).

Also on March 27, the *SS Koranton*, a British cargo steamer, when on route from Philadelphia for Hull, was torpedoed by U-98 and sunk with the loss of the 36 crew (Trevor Davies).

On March 15, 1942, the master, 34 crew members and six gunners of the British merchant fleet ship *Manaqui* were lost when the ship was sunk by an enemy vessel near Barbuda.

For years, it was believed that the ship was recorded as sunk by a German U-boat, U-504. More recently, it has been suggested that the Italian submarine *Morosini* was the source of the attack (Charles Wordingham).

On March 16, 1942, the unescorted *Baron Newlands* was hit by one torpedo from U68 and sank immediately by the bow six miles south of Cape Palmas, Liberia; 14 crew members and four gunners were lost.

The master, 17 crew members and two gunners, landed at Grande Sesters and Piccaniani Cess, near Cape Palmas (Septimus L Ashford, Alfred U Barnes, Jeremiah O'Connell, Joseph Sidney Stiff, Jaan Wahter, Frank H Warner).

At 23.17 hours on January 15, 1942, the *MV Diala* was torpedoed and damaged by U-553 about 300 miles east-south-east of Cape Race.

The vessel was proceeding after the convoy ON-52 was dispersed. The bow was blown off and the superstructure was extensively damaged.

The tanker was abandoned, but remained afloat and was reported drifting northeast; 48 crew members and nine gunners were lost.

The master, six crew members and one gunner were picked up by the British merchant *Telefora de Larrinaga* and landed at New York.

Four survivors from the *Athelcrown*, which had been sunk by U-82 on January 22, boarded the abandoned, drifting wreck of the *Diala*.

They remained on board for eight days before they were rescued by the Swedish merchant *Saturnus* and landed on the Faroes Isles.

On March 19, the drifting wreck was last seen by Allied ships in position 47°N/37°W, after attempts to tow her were unsuccessful. The wreck of the *Diala* was sunk on 23 March by U-587 (Henry J Tressider).

At 06.09 hours on March 25, 1942, the unescorted motor tanker *Narragansett* was hit in the stern by one torpedo from U-105, about 400 miles east of Hampton Roads, Virginia and sank burning after a hit with a coup de grâce at 06.18 hours.

The master, 42 crew members and six gunners were lost.

The tanker had been missed by a spread of three torpedoes at 04.01 hours and a spread of two torpedoes at 04.08 hours (Reginald E. Poole).

On March 29, 1942, the British steamer *Tredinnick* was torpedoed and sunk by the Italian submarine *Pietro Calvi*, all hands, 46 in total, were lost (Clifford A Powell).

On passage from Savannah to the UK, on March 31, 1942, the British steamship *Eastmoor* was torpedoed by U-71 and sank about 600 miles E. of Hampton Roads (Frank A Bettley-Cooke, Augustus Vanburgh).

The Battle of the Atlantic reached its climax in the spring of 1943, when the Germans were forced to withdraw their U-boats temporarily from the battle, after suffering crippling losses in what became known to them as 'Black May'.

An attack on Convoy ONS-5 (Apr 28 1943 – May 6 1943) was seen as the turning point in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Black May 1943 saw the U-boat strength reach its peak, with 240 operational U-boats, of which 118 were at sea, yet the sinking of Allied ships continued to decline. Black May also saw the greatest losses suffered by U-boats up to that time, with 41 being destroyed in May 1943 — 25 per cent of the operational U-boats.

Allied losses for March 1943 totalled 120 ships, of which 82 were lost in the Atlantic. The UBW (U-Boat Waffe) lost 12 U-boats during this time.

A Royal Navy report later concluded, "The Germans never came so near to disrupting communications between the New World and the Old as in the first twenty days of March 1943".

This year will be especially important, as it was in May 1943 that better deployment of technology and intelligence finally turned the tide against the wolf packs.

It was a pivotal moment, which allowed the logistical build-up that would ultimately lead to the success of D Day.

Though much was changing, war was war, and much more would occur:

At 23.15 hours on March 4, 1943, the unescorted *California Star* was hit by two torpedoes from U-515 about 335 miles northwest of Flores, Azores, a coup de grâce hit on the port side at 23.34 hours.

The vessel sank by the bow a few minutes after being hit on the port side. The U-boat surfaced to question the survivors and took the Second Officer George Cameron Smart as prisoner aboard.

At daybreak, the survivors decided that the master should sail the only lifeboat to the nearest land to get help for the survivors left behind drifting on rafts.

One boy died and was buried at sea before the boat with the master, 19 crew members and three passengers reached Flores after 11 days.

A subsequent search for the rafts was unsuccessful, they were never seen again. A total of 41 crew members, eight gunners and one passenger were lost (Peter D Ratnek).

The *SS Empire Tower* was a British cargo steamer launched as Roxburgh and again in 1937 she was renamed *Tower Field* and in 1942 *Empire Tower* for the British Government.

On March 5, 1943, when on route from Huelva and Gibraltar for Middlesbrough, she was torpedoed by German submarine U-130 and sunk; 38 crew lost from a total crew of 44 (Daniel Murphy).

At 23.09 hours on March 17, 1943, U-305 fired a spread of two torpedoes at the convoy SC-122 southeast of Cape Farewell and hit the *Port Auckland* in station number 93 and *Zouave* in station number 84, which sank within five minutes.

Twelve crew members and one gunner from *Zouave* were lost. The master, 24 crew members and five gunners were picked up by *HMS Godetia* (K 226) (Lt A.M .F. Larose) and landed at Gourock (Joseph F Payne).

At 15.40 hours on March 18, 1943, the *Clarissa Radcliffe*, a straggler from convoy SC-122 was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-663 west of Boston.

The ship was missed by three torpedoes, before the fourth sank her almost immediately. The master, 42 crew members and 12 gunners were lost (Pedro Lopez, Paul A. Phipps).

On March 22, 1945, the *Empire Kingsley*, a British cargo steam vessel on route from Ghent for Manchester in ballast, was torpedoed and sunk by German submarine U-315, 8 crew lost from a total crew of 57 (George Bryant).

Friday, March 30, 1945 saw the loss of the *SS Jim* bound for Dieppe, she was sunk, possibly, by a German midget submarine off Aldeburgh (William Foster).

It would, of course, be remiss not to mention that while we were a nation dependent on the sea for survival in those days, nothing has changed; we remain equally dependent today.

With so much of the UK's daily requirements still moving by sea and the future of resources and energy supply so dependent on the freedom to use the sea as a highway for trade, our prosperity as a nation is intricately linked to the sea.

This year's commemoration is not unique to the MN and RN effort; it is a national and international one.

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News in and out of class at Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg

Well done!

AS a school, we would like to congratulate Mali O'Donnell, year-10 on her performance in the Sherman Theatre's youth show and Mali Thomas, year-8 on her performance in the show *Tommy* with the Bridgend Youth Theatre.

Warm congratulations also to Anwen Fardy, year-8 on being selected to play the harp in the Great Britain National Children's Orchestra for this year.

We are very proud of her achievement and also of Jodi Bird, year-10 on her audition with the TV programme *Britain's Got Talent*.

She is still anxiously waiting to hear if she has been successful in progressing to the next round.

We wish her all the best in the competition. We'd also like to congratulate her on her recent appearance in Margret Williams' programme on S4C.

Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg pupils will be appearing in the new series of the S4C TV drama *Gwaith Cartref* which airs every Sunday evening.

Also look out for year-8 pupils taking part in the S4C children's television programme *Stwnsh* on Saturday April 20.

Biology trip to museum

YEAR-12 pupils studying biology recently went to the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff to take part in a taxonomy and evolution Workshop.

Eisteddfod results

ON March 15, about 100 pupils from Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg went to compete in the Urdd County Eisteddfod at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr.

Congratulations to all who competed, the standard of competition was very high.

Here's a list of pupils who will go on to compete in the Urdd National Eisteddfod in Pembrokeshire in May:

Year 7-9 girls solo – Llinos Jones; year 7-9 duet – Manon and Llinos; year 7, 8 and 9 girls choir; year 7, 8 and 9 dramatic performance; year 7, 8 and 9 Ymgom – Lois Aled, Nia Fenn and Nia Brown; year 10 and under-19 years folk melody solo – Jodi Bird; year 7-9 solo recitation – Tanwen Cray; year 7-9 boys solo – Aled Misra; year 7-9 Cerdd Dant solo – Llinos Jones; year 9 and under Cerdd Dant duet – Llinos and Manon; year 7-9 harp solo – Anwen Fardy; year 7, 8 and 9 folk dancing.

Welsh language awards

Congratulations to a group of years 8 and 9 pupils who have been working hard throughout the year in the radio club and have been awarded a certificate for 'Special Contribution to the Welsh Language outside of the classroom': Lucy Jenkins, Cameron Pemberton, Gethin Lodge, Joseph Rosser, Jacob Bowen, Jac Marshall, Joseff Cattle, Morgan Long, Gwilym David, Joshua Lewis, Adam Palmer and Jack Harrison.

Dissection study

YEAR-12 pupils studying biology have been dissecting fish recently, while studying gills for their AS Level Biology 2 exam.

Drama workshop

YEAR-10 pupils studying drama had the opportunity to work with the director Ian Rowlands on a collection of new dramas that have been published by 'Gwasg Gomer'.

Hana Evans

Congratulations to singer / songwriter Hana Evans, year-8 on making it through to the live regional finals of the National Competition 'TeenStar'. Good Luck.

Alana Ali

Congratulations to Alana Ali, year-7, winner of the 'Design the Llais y Disgybl Logo' competition.

The logo will be launched on the website soon.

Alana Ali. (see story below).

ABOVE: Year-12 students on their biology trip.

ABOVE: Some of the students who received a Welsh langauge award for their work with the radio club.

What are your **EASTER PLANS?**

REFRESH, RENEW, REPAIR...

Remember clocks SPRING FORWARD this weekend!

LONGER DAYS ARE HERE AT LAST!

IT'S TIME TO START MAKING PLANS TO ENJOY YOUR HOME AND GARDEN

THIS March has not been a good one as far as the weather goes, but it can be relied upon to deliver one very welcome event without fail.

It is, of course, the month when the clocks go forward and the days suddenly get longer.

Along comes April and (we hope) the weather gets warmer and thoughts inevitably turn to taking advantage of that seasonal improvement.

It is the time of year when those winter daydreams can be turned into reality.

Work in the house or garden has been planned, trips away have been researched, and diary entries have been made, making time and space for a plethora of projects.

For some, the chosen project will be that old traditional favourite – spring cleaning.

If that is what is on your radar, then it can save a lot of time to look around and see which areas of expertise are available in the Vale to help you.

Whether you get a buzz from spring cleaning – or whether it is a bit of a chore – there are ways to do the job quicker and more thoroughly, if you do your research.

Perhaps you could bring a specialist in to tackle the most time-consuming tasks?

That way, you would have more time to do all the other stuff. You could finish it ahead of schedule, and then start something new.

Or, you could reward yourself for your efficiency by starting that book you have put aside since Christmas, or head off on a day trip.

Don't forget easily over-looked tasks such as changing the batteries on smoke alarms. Smoke alarm and CO2 alarms should have their batteries changed once a year.

Of course, at this time of the year many people have a longer break in mind than just a day trip.

It's a great time to take a long weekend or a week's holiday., and head to that area you can't believe you haven't explored.

For this writer, I'm ashamed to say, it's west Wales!

If you are taking that chance to head off in the car, it is best to make sure that your car isn't due a check-up.

It has been a rough winter, and it's a good idea to see your friendly garage and get things checked out, because a short break can be badly damaged by a vehicle malfunction!

A different spring activity is getting stuck into your garden maintenance, and there are more than a few tasks which need to be tackled.

For those lucky enough to have mature landscaping in the yard, early spring is an excellent time to prune shrubs and tree limbs that are dead, diseased, or touching your home.

After pruning away overhanging tree limbs, it's a good idea to check the roof in case your trees have shed any branches during the winter winds.

Once again, when planning your garden spring cleaning, it is a good idea to weigh up how much time you have, and consider whether 'delegating' some tasks to an expert could free up your time to give you a better opportunity to indulge your creative side.

Don't forget, The GEM features many local services that are there to make your life easier, so why not take advantage of that when your plan your next garden project!

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Cadets' adventure training In the Black Mountains

ABOVE: Time for a photo shoot.

RECENTLY, 12 Air Cadets from 372 (Barry) Squadron, travelled to the Black Mountains to walk up Sugarloaf to train cadets to a competent degree of navigation and team building skills.

The cadets walked 12 kilometres gaining 800 feet of height. The walk gave some of the younger cadets a taste of the outdoors and what is expected of them on their Duke of Edinburgh bronze expeditions.

The route followed a mixture of well defined paths, tracks, forestry sections as well as moderate climbs. The cadets worked very well, encouraging and assisting each other throughout the day.

They also had a first aid exercise which they successfully dealt with. The pace throughout the day remained brisk, helped with good weather and wonderful views of the area.

Cadet Pippa Cowles said: "it was really cool and the views from the top of Sugar Loaf were amazing. I enjoy the challenge of the walk and I learnt so much which will help me prepare my Duke of Edinburgh expedition".

Adventurous training forms a very important part of the cadets' training. Rigorous training covers – teambuilding, leadership, mountain craft, camp craft, safety training and navigation before going on the hills. Recently, the squadron has travelled to the Forest of Dean and Neath Valleys in preparation for their forthcoming Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.

Cadets Nathan David, Rachel Carbis, Jack Cowles, Alex Spragg, Jake Paterson, Steph Jones, Georgina and Ellie Poulakis, Rhondda Gulley, Bethan Williams, Pippa Cowles and Jamie-Leigh Bird benefited from this taste of the great outdoors.

If you have a spirit for adventure, 372 (Barry) Squadron have vacancies for boys and girls between 13-18 years old. The Squadron parade on Mondays and Wednesdays 7 – 9.30pm behind Adams Funeral Parlour (by the Memorial Hall) or you can phone the Squadron on 01446 747734 or email oc.372@air-cadets.org.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012

Conservation Area Consent/
Caniatâd Ardal Gadwraeth

Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2013/00186/CAC
Proposal:/Cynnig:	External renovations, ground floor extension and new vehicular entrance
Location:/Lleoliad:	The Tower, Tower Hill, Penarth
Conservation Area:/ Ardal Gadwraeth	Penarth

Listed Building Consent/
Caniatâd Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2013/00180/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Repair/renovation, including demolition of chimney stack and replacement of 5 No. windows on main building; plus works to store block
Location:/Lleoliad:	Albert Road Primary School, Albert Road, Penarth
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig	Grade II
Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2013/00189/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Single storey rear extension and internal alterations
Location:/Lleoliad:	10, Pwll y Myn Crescent, Peterston Super Ely
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig	Grade II
Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2013/00196/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Alterations to ground floor and extension to rear of ground floor
Location:/Lleoliad:	29, High Street, Cowbridge
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig	Grade II
Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2013/00197/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Three internally illuminated textbands; two internally illuminated projectors; one internally illuminated round brand logo; two internally illuminated heritage window light strips; one externally non illuminated applied vinyl; two externally non illuminated aluminium name plate; two internally non illuminated applied vinyl's
Location:/Lleoliad:	Lloyds TSB Bank Plc, 1, Windsor Road, Penarth
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig	Grade II

Affecting setting of a Listed Building/
Cais (au) sy'n effeithio ar leoliad Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2013/00186/CAC
Proposal:/Cynnig:	External renovations, ground floor extension and new vehicular entrance
Location:/Lleoliad:	The Tower, Tower Hill, Penarth
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig	Affecting Nos. 1-5 Tower Hill Avenue, Grade II and Coastguard Cottage, No. 2 Marine Parade, Penarth, Grade II

May affect a Public Right of Way/
Gall effeithio ar Hawl Tramwy Cyhoeddus

Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2013/00173/RG3
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Double classroom extension to existing school
Location:/Lleoliad:	Ysgol Dewi Sant, Ham Lane East, Llantwit Major

Details may be inspected for 21 days at the address given below, or via **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Gall manylion eu harchwilio am 21 diwrnod yn y cyfeiriad a roddir isod, neu drwy **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Dated / Dyddiedig: 28 March, 2013

M. Goldsworthy, Operational Manager Development & Building Control, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Dock Office, Barry. CF63 4RT

Lord Lieutenant heads the VIP gathering at annual church service

THE Lieutenancy of South Glamorgan held the annual church service this year at St. Mary's Church, Penmark, by permission of the Vicar and Church Wardens.

It was conducted by the Venerable Peggy Jackson, Archdeacon of Llandaff and Rev Stewart Lisk, honorary chaplain.

The Lord Lieutenant and serving and supernumerary Deputy Lieutenants, families and guests, were then welcomed to a reception at Fonmon Castle by the Vice-Lord Lieutenant, Sir Brooke Boothby and Mrs Penny Hale.

Photographs by **HEATHER MARCH**

Archdeacon Jackson and High Sheriff.

Sir Brooke and Mrs Hale with the Lord Lieutenant's cadets.

The Chaplain to the Lieutenancy and Commander Peter Machin.

Lord Lieutenant Dr. Peter Beck and Mrs Beck arrive at Penmark.

Sir Brooke greets Deputy Lieutenants Mr Nigel Walker and Mr Geraint Talfan Davies.

Chatting to Lieutenant Col Sam Smith of Llanbethery.

The High Sheriff of South Glamorgan Mr Arun Midha and Mrs Midha.

Brynhill *(and Tommy)* raise £3,000 for hospital appeal

ON Friday March 15, a charity evening with raffles and an auction was held at Brynhill Golf Club, Barry – in aid of the haematology department at University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff.

The event was superbly organised by Mr Richard Pierce and magnificently compered by Dr Andrew Davies.

The guest speaker was the famous Wales and British Lions flanker, Tommy David, who entertained all present with his amusing tales of Lions tours, Welsh games and the famous 1971 Barbarians' match against the All Blacks ,in which he had taken a starring role..

The fundraising had begun a few weeks earlier by past ladies' captain Jo Kirkpatrick, who cajoled the members into buying raffle tickets.

Together with the rugby memorabilia (many items kindly donated by Tommy David and Mike Phillips) auctioned on the night, the grand sum raised was just short of £3,000.

Special thanks go to Professor Nick Topley, who donated prizes for the raffle and also to Mrs Julie Bannister (Brynhill's new caterer) for an excellent meal and service on the night; 85 people supported the charity event, with many guests from the haematology department.

Consultant haematologists, Mr Jonathan Kell and Mr Keith Wilson thanked Brynhill for their donation and for the warm welcome received from the club members. **JWK**

Easter egg hunt at the Penarth Farmers' Market

DESPITE the freezing weather local children enjoyed an Easter egg hunt held at Penarth Farmers' Market last Saturday, March 23.

Pegs were hidden around the market, which the children could redeem for Easter eggs. One special peg was found by five-year-old Mackenzie Jeffreys, who won the large chocolate bunny.

Chairman Dai Llewellyn of Great House Farm, Penllyn, coordinated the excited children!

The next market is on April 6, at Cowbridge, when it will be running another Easter egg hunt.

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Cambrian Avenue, Llantwit Major
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South Side Location
£165,950 D68

Cambrian Avenue, Llantwit Major
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Public Notices

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

STEPHEN FLOYD Trading as Environmental Groundworks Ltd

of

63 Highfield Place, Sarn, Bridgend CF32 9RN

is applying to change an existing licence as follows:

To keep an extra 2 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at the operating centre at **John Raymond Transport Yard, Ewenny Industrial Estate, Bridgend, CF31 3EZ**

Owners or occupiers of land, (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at **Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF** stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice.

A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

Family Notices

DEERE

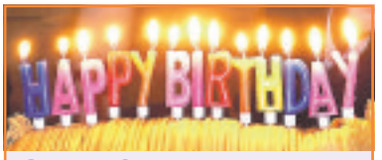
William (Bill)

Suddenly on Sunday 24th March 2013 at Milsom House Nursing Home, St Athan after a long illness bravely fought. Bill, a much loved husband of Rosemary, cherished dad of Jeremy, Jamie and the late Kevin, and daughters-in-law Alison and Fatema. Dearly loved bampa to Zak, Lauren, Sam and Ian.

Bill will be greatly missed by family and friends.

Funeral Service in St Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major on Wednesday, 3rd April at 12 noon followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium at 1.15pm. Family flowers only, but donations may be made to Parkinsons Disease Society c/o W.A. Brown & Son, College Street, Llantwit Major (cheques only please)

Birthdays



SIMON BAILEY

lots of love

Carolyn & Isla xxx

Happy Birthday DON JOHN

on

2nd April from all your friends at The GEM

Happy 18th Birthday

Georgia Anderson

Legal at Last!

Lots of Love from all of us

x x x x x

Thank You

THANK YOU

to the lady who found my camera in Porthcawl on Wednesday, 20th March and kindly handed it in to the ice cream kiosk.

"Faith in human nature restored"

– David Newman

Motors For Sale

52 plate Peugeot 206 Look 1.4 3-dr

Metallic silver, remote locking, PAS, CD, 1 year Mot, 4 months tax. Excellent condition.

£1,295

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2003 Citroen Berlingo 600 DLX

Diesel Van, white. New MoT, battery and exhaust. 74,000 miles. Woodlined, roofbars. Above average condition.

£1,995 No VAT

07967 100321 13/14

2002 Peugeot 206CC Cabriolet

Silver, black/red leather interior. One owner. Excellent condition

£2,300 ono

01446 733233 13/14

07 VW Fox 55PS 1litre

Silver, 46,000 miles, tax, MoT, FSH. One previous owner. Very low insurance group.

£3,795 ono

07967 309535 13/14

Carole Pope would like to thank Nigel and Mandy for their support at this sad time.

God bless you both x

The GEM

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Articles For Sale

2 Glass Display Cabinets

with internal mains powered lighting. 2ft 9ins wide x 4ft 7ins high.

£40 each

(will sell separately)

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Eleven Harrods ChristmasTeddy Bears 2000 - 2010

All as new. Labelled, collectables, 18 inches high.

Bargain £250

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Extending Mahogany effect Dining Table & 4 Chairs

Sideboard to match £150 ono (will separate) Cane Furniture, 3 chairs, table, cupboard with light green cushions.

£100 ono

All excellent condition

01446 405207 13/14

Teak Desk and Storage £50

Dining table and 4 chairs £35. Glass TV table 2-tier, chrome £15. Single bed and storage under drawers £40. 2 Fine double wardrobes + drawers £60. Bedside Table £10. 2 seater settee, leather, green.

Owner moving to care home

Buyer collects

Ring for appointment to view

Cowbridge 01446 775233 13/14

Green Leather Riser/recliner Arm Chair £50

Four wheel Motability walker and seat £45

Electric single Riser Bed £100

Ring for appointment to view

01446 775233 13/14

Brian James Micro-Max Trailer for Smart Car

£875

01446 747680 12

19in Technika Flatscreen HDTV

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Cordless BT Freestyle 750

with large numbers

£50 ono.

Tel: 01446 710791 12

Bombettes blitz gutsy Gorseinon

ON a bitterly cold afternoon, Barry Bombettes faced Gorseinon in a cup quarter final.

The Barry forwards immediately took control and dominated the scrum. This domination resulted in scrum half Bannister getting quality ball to her backs with Rees and Britton to the fore.

Barry pressure resulted in a Gorseinon infringement on their 22 metre line. The Bombettes opted for a scrum and several dominant scrums and drives later, No 8 Cole powered over for a deserved short range try; the conversion was missed.

From the kick off Barry powered their way back into the visiting half and became encamped in the Gorseinon 22. Again powerful driving by the forwards resulted in the out of place but alert centre Jones was propelled over the line by prop Richards; the conversion was missed to make the score 10-0.

The Bombettes continued in the same manner at the start of the second half, playing up the slope but with the strong wind behind them. The forwards battered the Gorseinon line and this softening up was rewarded by Cole breaking for an easy touch down.

Phillips replaced Cahill, with Beare coming on for Hill. Gorseinon, to their credit, carried on with mounting injuries, but their resistance was broken as Jones powered over for her second try. Richards' conversion made the score 22-0 and Gorseinon graciously conceded the game

Team: Hill, Potter, Britton, K Jones (c), Rees, Bannister, O'Neill, Cole, Yapp, Williams, Garner-Joel, Boffy, Cahill, Richards, Horne. Replacements: Phillips, Beare, Major, B Jones and Kronda.

Barry woman of the match was awarded to Yapp while Gorseinon chose Cole.

The management would like to congratulate the whole team for a professional performance and a well deserved quarter final victory. The forwards laid the ground work but the whole squad take the plaudits. Special mention to our birthday girl Becky Boffy and Zara Potter and thanks, as ever, to Rachel Baron for the lovely food.

We are always looking for new players, no experience needed. We train at the Barry RFC clubhouse at 7pm on Tuesdays, and Thursdays at 7.45pm at Bryn Hafren Astro pitch.

The next match is on Sunday, April 14, kick off 2.30pm, in the semi-final of the Bowl against the winners of Croesyceiliog v Blaenau Gwent. **AM**

Jane and Denis win at Barrivale

LATEST results from Barrivale, March 5:

1st Jane Brook & Denis Mottram 63.89%; 2nd Mark Roderick & Mike Close 62.5%; 3rd Mick Green & Mike Best 57.64%; Jane & Denis also won on handicap.

March 12: 1st Tom Kendrick & Dave Thomas 59.03%; =2nd Mick Green & Denis Mottram and Irene Thomas & Graham Jones 57.64%; Tom & Dave also won on handicap.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale - if you would like to join us ring 01446 418380 or 01446 733425, or call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry on Tuesdays at 7pm.

MB

Rhod gears up for Kilimanjaro

ARCTIC chills blowing through Wales have been the ideal preparation for comedian Rhod Gilbert, as he prepares for his trek up Mount Kilimanjaro in aid of the Velindre Cancer Centre, Cardiff.

Rhod will be leading 50 intrepid trekkers, including Martyn Williams, Iolo Williams and Shan Cothi, on September 20. He was recently kitted out with his trekking gear at Cotswold Outdoors in Cardiff.

Rhod said: "I've performed in front of UK troops in Iraq, and 60,000 people at Twickenham for Help The Heroes, I've tried to make the Queen laugh with a potato, and had a pop at Prince Charles for parking outside my house at the Royal Variety Performance, but this is my toughest challenge yet."

Rhod can be sponsored at: www.justgiving.com/rhodskilitrek.

Peugeot Partner will help to make delivery on time, whatever weather!

MOTORING with TIM SAUNDERS

DELIVERY drivers are a misunderstood breed. Imagine what their lives must be like with a never ending list of deliveries to make to various locations within a set time frame.

This is only set to increase as online shopping becomes ever more popular. Remember this demanding schedule when one pulls out in front of you without indicating.

What do these drivers do when they can't get there on time because of snow, for instance? Simple. Often appointments are missed and rescheduled at the customer's inconvenience, in my experience, with no apology and certainly no compensation.

This unhelpful and all too regular scenario is sure to have arisen many times over the recent inclement weather.

Without doubt it leads to customer disloyalty especially when dealing with businesses who demand a reliable service to prevent a knock on effect down the supply chain.

Wouldn't it, therefore, be helpful if there was a van that could handle the snow and ice? A van that is ideal for those remote parts of England or even the Highlands of Scotland.

Well, I am pleased to report that there is in the form of the new Peugeot Partner all-terrain van, which is fitted with an indispensable grip control.

This dial found to the left of the steering wheel allows the driver to select the appropriate mode for the conditions and responds accordingly.

But I notice that this grip control falls back to its original setting when the engine is switched off so the driver needs to remember this when they set off again.

My test takes place as Britain emerges from a heavy snowfall and rain turns to ice. Needless to say that it remains in ice and snow mode for the duration of the test.

The Peugeot Partner SE HDi 92

There's also an ASR (anti-slip regulation) providing further surefootedness. It makes light work of manoeuvring out of an ice covered car park while other vehicles remain stranded.

With its extra 10mm height over a normal Partner van the driver of this all-terrain model enjoys a good view of the road ahead.

It feels competent on the motorway with only a mere hint of buffeting. The upgraded 195/70 R15 tyres, specifically for mud and snow, give the driver added confidence that they will make their deliveries on time.

Parkers, the car experts, say: "Peugeot's Partner is a versatile and capable city van, aimed at small businesses in need of something dependable and easy to live with.

"It's built alongside the Citroen Berlingo and the two siblings rival each other at the top of the class. The trusty companion ticks all the right boxes, with some clever tricks, a hugely versatile model line-up (buyers have the pick of three engines, three payloads and two body lengths) and competitive list prices. As a result, Partner is one of the most tempting small vans on sale in the UK."

The other striking feature of this van is that it has three seats in the cabin. This opens up the possibility of my wife and daughter in her baby seat travelling in the van, too.

Forward facing child seats can be used in the front of vans but it is necessary to consult the handbook to check how far the airbag inflates.

There is no problem with placing Harriett in the middle seat because there is no airbag in the centre of the dash.

She loves it but we have to ensure that she does not change gear while daddy is driving. I then have to make sure the van's seat is as far back from the dashboard as possible.

It is almost a bench seat, but not quite because there is a slight gap between the driver's seat and the two passenger seats, to make room for the handbrake.

When three are travelling it's relatively comfortable but snug. It is helpful that the stereo controls are also mounted on the steering column helping the driver to remain focused on the road ahead. Economical, it will travel over 500 miles on a tank if driven sensibly and there is a sizeable amount of room in the wood-lined rear for transporting goods as you can see from the video at testdrives.biz.

Delivery drivers will appreciate the fact that the useful sliding side door and double rear doors automatically lock when the ignition is turned. This does give peace of mind. There are plenty of cubby holes in the cabin and places to slot drinks, too.

This well-designed, agile and easy to drive van, could also appeal to carpenters and builders.

Peugeot Partner SE HDi 92.

OTR price: £14,015.

1.6-litre diesel 0-60mph: 14.1secs.

Top speed: 99mph.

Kerb weight: 1,315kg.

Length: 4,628mm.

Width: 2,112mm.

Height: 1834mm.

Watch the video at: www.testdrives.biz.

Students pass their grading test

Pictured with their instructors and grading examiners are the successful candidates.

RECENTLY, the Cadoxton Schools of Tae Kwon Do held their first colour belt grading of the year at the Victoria Park Community Centre.

The grading saw 27 students from as young as five sitting the test, which was conducted by master Ron Thomas (8th Dan) with Jamie Halford (4th Dan) and assisted by Anita Sheppard (1st Dan).

All 27 students passed their grading, and three achieved top grade A passes. These were Ben Phillips, Katie Watkins and the winner of the grading shield, Cian Allen.

Successful candidates were:

Promoted to 10a orange stripe – Thea Cunningham and Fae Hillberg.

Promoted to 9th kup orange belt – Camron Hales, Lucia Cunningham.

Promoted to 8th kup yellow belt – Katie Watkins, Martin James, Angel Sharp, Ben Phillips and Kurtis James.

Promoted to 7th kup green stripe – Jason Blackley.

Promoted to 6th kup green belt – Thomas Pugh, Joel Wells and Emily Halford.

Promoted to 5th kup blue stripe – Cody Jacobsen, Jake Quigley and Evan Baron.

Promoted to 4th kup blue belt – Daniel Quigley, Demi Baker and Cian Allen.

Promoted to 2nd kup red belt – Alan Evans, Gabrielle Thorne and Ryan Thorne.

Promoted to 1st kup black stripe – Jasmine Sullivan, Shannon Haysham, Oliver Tipples, Thomas and Molly Shivers.

For further information, telephone 01446 406372 or see www.taekwondoassociationeurope.co.uk.

RT

Cowbridge RFC beat Penygraig by a whisker!

THE Millenium Stadium one week, Penygraig the next.

Two stands, no roof, surrounded by beautiful snow covered mountains and a pitch like an uncooked Christmas pudding - welcome back to Division 4 South East.

With still nine games to play it was no surprise that despite the reservations of the referee both captains agreed to go ahead with the game.

Considering the gluepot conditions both sides were prepared to run the ball from the off and Penygraig had the first scoring opportunity after three minutes, hitting the post from a penalty.

Cowbridge showed great enterprise with the ball in hand with a storming run by No 8 Ryan Hall and deft footwork by wing Jamie Picton-Turberville and this all paid off after 20 minutes with a fine try by outside half Carwyn Morgan following some great interplay between forwards and backs.

Morgan added the points with the conversion.

Cowbridge kept up the pressure with some good running from full back Richie Howson and centres Luke Boys and Elia Pellegrotti.

Just before half time a great charge down by flanker Matt Logsdon resulted in a Cowbridge penalty that was just wide

Cowbridge continued the good work at the start of the second half with hooker Rhys Price providing some charging kicks and rushes up the pitch and it didn't take long before they were back on the scoreboard.

With crunching tackles by Boys and prop Dai Popham keeping Penygraig on the back foot it was another storming run by Hall that took Cowbridge up to the home side's 22 and the ball was spun out to Pellegrotti to sprint over for Cowbridge's second try.

Cowbridge then seemed to lose their way a little and despite their lowly position in the league, the Penygraig pack started to dominate as Cowbridge began to leak penalties.

It was a lineout from one of these penalties that provided Penygraig with their first try as they barged over the line after 20 minutes,failing to convert.

It was the pack that again provided Penygraig with their second try as their No 8 picked up and drove over.Penygraig continued the pressure but with just a few minutes to go a tremendous Cowbridge drive from a Penygraig lineout and two massive scrums when Cowbridge more than held their own took us to the final whistle and a very relieved Cowbridge team.

Final score: Penygraig 10 Cowbridge 12.

This was an exhausting game and credit to both sides for giving it their all.

Cowbridge held out with some ferocious tackling and great belief up front despite great pressure in the second half. Well done boys in terrible conditions.

This was just the fourth game this year and fixture secretary Nick Jones has been working hard rearranging the backlog of fixtures.

There are still eight league games to play as follows: this Saturday we welcome Old Illtydians to the Athletic ground,and then on Wednesday, April 3 we're again at home against Wattstown (kick off 6.30pm) followed by Abercwmboi away on April 6, Llandaff North on April 13 at home, Llantwit Major on April 20 away, Llandaff away on April 27, Llantwit at home on Wednesday, May 1 (kick off 6.30pm) and finally Pontycymmer at home to be decided on May 7/8/9.

This should be an exciting run-in to the end of the season with still lots to play for in a tight league, so come along and support the boys.

RV/RK

Manchester United football school coaches young Llantwit stars

SIX of Llantwit Major Schools' budding year 8 footballers spent the weekend being coached by some of the best coaches in the world at a Manchester United Soccer School weekend.

The boys spent two days working on their football skills and picking up tips on how to improve their game.

Sam Snaith and Ben Boyd both were recognised as potential star players and received recognition by their coach.

As a result Llantwit Major School is in the running to be invited to Manchester United's Champions day, where the school football squad would visit Old Trafford and play in a champion's tournament; fingers crossed we are selected! Well done boys!

Pupils who attended were Ben Boyd, Sam Snaith, Joe Baker, Chris Davies, Rhys Richards and James Harries.

SL

WHAT'S ON - in brief

Live Music

ON Saturday, April 6 (Easter weekend), Llantwit Major RFC will be the venue for Live Lounge, a night dedicated to live music, being held to raise funds for the club itself and Marie Curie Cancer Support.

Live music from 4th Street Traffic, official support act to the Stereophonics and Manic Street Preachers.

They are also the headline band for Wales' RBS Six Nations 2013 campaign. Tickets £6 available at Llantwit Major RFC.

Dog walks

KENFIG nature reserve is promoting responsible dog walking by bringing friendly dogs and owners together for a Tuesday socialising walk, taken by Claire Richardson, from Bark and Ride dog walking, day care and training.

She is on hand to answer questions and give advice where needed from 1.30 pm. Contact Claire Richardson on 07792 980 366 for more details.

Vale golf juniors triumph in Spain

THE Vale Resort's junior golf team is celebrating its latest success after taking joint first place at the Junior Team Golf Home Nations Inter Club Championships in Antequera, Spain.

The Vale Juniors with Graeme Vorston of the Principality (left) and Stephen Leeke of the Vale Resort.

The team, captained by Callum Yorston (17) from Hensol and made up of Delon Hau (18) from Tonyrefail, Ryan Thomas (18) from Cardiff, Tim Harry (15) from Dinas Powys, Harrie Llewellyn (15) from Whitchurch, Mathew Rees (15) from Bridgend, Ollie Lloyd (17) from Miskin, and Ollie Brown (14) from Peterson-super-Ely, went head-to-head with the best junior teams from the UK.

A tense week of golf played in poor weather conditions resulted in a first place tie between the Vale Resort and St Pierre, Chepstow, the first time in the competition's 19-year history that a Welsh team has made it to the final.

Clive Coombs, the Vale Resort's golf operations manager, said: "Yet again, the junior team have done themselves and the Vale Resort proud. They played some brilliant golf and conducted themselves like true sports men and women throughout the competition.

"The fact that a Welsh team has never even made it to the final of this competition before, let alone won, shows that the investment the Vale Resort has put into nurturing up-and-coming golfing talent through our golf academy is certainly paying off.

"We are also lucky to have dedicated people who have put many hours into working with the team, and some very generous sponsors, without whom this trip would not have been possible."

Team captain Callum Yorston said: "I was honoured to be captain of such an inspiring team who gave their all in difficult conditions. Bringing the trophy home to Wales makes this one of the best weeks of our lives."

The Vale's junior team is sponsored by the Principality Building Society, which is strongly committed to supporting grass roots sport in Wales.

As part of its commitment to supporting the golfing stars of the future, the Vale currently offers a special Junior golfing package. Open to young people aged between 8 – 18 years, it includes free access to the Vale's academy coaching scheme, a copy of the academy's coaching manual and more than 50 per cent off junior membership for the first year.

For more information on the programme, please visit www.vale-hotel.com/golf.

More praise for Bryn!

TREDODRIDGE'S Bryn Palling, featured in last week's GEM and whose racing yard is up for sale following his recent retirement, has come in for more praise.

Derek and Jean Clee, who had horses with top trainers Sir Henry Cecil, Richard Hannon and Mike Channon, moved to Wales in 1999 and were looking for a local trainer, in addition to other trainers.

They said: "When we discovered Bryn and Marge's yard, we found it warm and friendly and we soon realised we were joining a large family.

"We were always made welcome at any time, not just by Bryn and his wife Marge but by the numerous other owners who always seemed to be present.

It seemed that every owner shared in each other's triumphs and expectations, and with endless cups of tea and biscuits from Marge, we had numerous hours of pleasure. In total, Bryn trained 15 winners for us."

Paul Young, an owner with Bryn for 25 years and who had shares in 46 of the many winners Bryn saddled over the years, including the prolific *Carranita*, said: "What I liked about Bryn and Marge was that they made everyone welcome. We were treated the same whether we had a 10 per cent share in a horse or whether we were the sole owners of three or four."

TIMEFORM HORSES TO FOLLOW

Flat race enthusiasts will want to avail themselves of *Timeform Horses To Follow* (published by Timeform Limited, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX1 1XF at £9.95).

There are 50 horses to follow, the big name interviews, future stars, trainers for courses and much, much more.

Look out for Sir Michael Stoute's *Telescope* as he '... has the potential to develop into one of the stars of the season.'

RACING AT LLYSWORNEY

I have before me a racecard for the Ely Valley Horse And Pony Racing Club horse race meeting at Llysworney (Nr Cowbridge) for July 5, 1986.

The big event was 'The Grand Mile' with a first prize of £1,000. The marked racecard informs us that this was won by *Alpha*, a nine-year-old gelding owned by Mr G Griffiths of Gilfach Goch, and the formguide tells us that *Alpha* was 'a winner in Scotland and Cowbridge last week.'

Little Saint, owned by L Rogers of Llangeinor, won £150 for finishing second and the third prize of £50 went to *The Rose,* owned by Mr C Bridge of Tonyrefail.

If you have any memories, photographs or anecdotes of these now vanished flapping meetings which were held in the Vale, or any other places for that matter, then I would be delighted to hear from you.

You can e-mail your news or views to Brian Lee at brianlee4@virgin-media.com or phone him on 02920736438.

BRIAN LEE

Atoms surge to double victory

BARRY Atoms played two games on the weekend.

The first game was played against Whitchurch, and quite frankly the score could have been a lot more except for a disallowed try, a knock forward and a few other mistakes.

The Atoms went three tries up through J.Couch, D.Griffiths and I.Escott and the unselfish team work was a joy to behold.

Whitchurch started the second half with a try and were making a right battle of this, but with another try finished off by R.Robinson we knew this game was really over. Whitchurch grounded off a consolation try to make final score 4-2 to the Atoms.

Next we were treated to visiting English touring side St.Thomas'. We did wonder what level they would play at as they came with a good reputation, being a prep school side.

We were again treated to an Atoms performance that really did take them to another level. In such conditions the determination to win was immense and so pleasing to see these kids play as a unit. St.Thomas were technically very good and strong. We simply had too much for them and would have given anybody a run for their money in this form.

Great tries from Z.Fifield, D.Griffiths (2) and R.Robinson put them to the sword. Final score Atoms 4, St.Thomas' 0

A little mention to another new player, playing his first ever game - Kaiden Jones, well done

Squad: D.Wall, I.Escott, R.Rendell, D.Griffiths, F.Giosanu, T.Mort, Z.Fifield, J.Brown, R.Robinson, C.Couch C.Macarthur, C.Denbury J.Long K.Jones.

DD

Steeplechases rearranged

THE Glamorgan Hunt Steeplechases due last Saturday (March 23) at Ystradowen have been rearranged and will now be staged on Saturday, April 6 – first race at 2pm.

The weather played havoc last weekend resulting in the cancellation of most point to points nationwide and even the professional racing at Newbury, Doncaster and Stratford were lost to the elements.

The Monmouthshire Hunt fixture due this Saturday at Llanvapley has been cancelled due to the poor ground conditions.

The Ystradowen meeting will stage six exciting steeplechases with sideshows, tradestands, caterers and bars available for the visiting public.

Admission is car and driver £10, then £5 per adult – children under 16 free.

PT

Welsh disability championships are in Cardiff

THE Rotary Welsh Schools Disability Championships South Wales Final took place on March 20 at Sport Wales National Centre, in Sophia Gardens, Cardiff.

164 gymnasts competed on the day, with foundation phase and key stage 2 children competing in the morning and key stage 3 and 4 children performing in the afternoon.

The competition's finalists were selected from one of seven regional rounds held across the country - competitors in the south final came from all over the south Wales region including Bridgend and the Vale.

Disability Sport Wales chief executive Jon Morgan explained how important it was for sporting governing bodies to have an inclusive approach to disability sport: "It's a perfect example of an inclusive approach of a governing body in Wales and it's more of this that we want to see across the whole of the Welsh sporting landscape."

Pontyclun club bowling along nicely!

PONTYCLUN Bowls Club was set up in 1932 and is a strong village-based club under the umbrella of Pontyclun Athletic Club.

As well as being able to look back proudly at its heritage, the club is looking forward to the 2013 season with excitement and is delighted to be one of those selected to play in the inaugural season of the new South Glamorgan County Bowling Association league.

In addition to the new league, Pontyclun teams take part in leagues organised by the Rhondda Borough Bowling Association, Taff Ely Bowling Association, and the Alliance.

On most Saturdays during the season, it fields two sides in the East Wales Private Greens league, which includes many of the top clubs in Barry, Penarth, Cardiff and the valleys.

Pontyclun BC is home to established competitive bowlers at club, county and international levels and also has has a core of social bowlers, all supported by a committed coaching team.

The club's broad base is also reflected in the age range of players, which spans from early teens to seventies and beyond.

If you'd like to learn more about bowls in a traditional village-based club, take a look at our website: *www.ponty-clunbowlsclub-co.com.*

The club is holding a series of open evenings at 6pm on April 19 and 26, May 3 and 10. Our coaching team will be on hand to offer help and advice and can provide all the kit that you'll need to get started. If you'd like to come along to an open evening, we'd like to see you.

Beryl Smith (01443) 224096 and Avril Davies (01443) 222260, are happy to provide information on ladies bowls in Pontyclun. Pontyclun Ladies Bowls Club is also an integral part of Pontyclun Athletic Club, located in the heart of the village.

GJT

Cowbridge under-14s pipped at post

COWBRIDGE under-14s were pipped at the post yet again as Bridgend Sports scored a late try to rob Cowbridge of what would have been a well deserved draw.

The home side were rampant in the first 15 minutes, scoring three tries through Dewi Bennett, Dan Bunney and Sam Palmer, with two conversions by outside half Cai Evans giving Cowbridge a 19 point lead.

Through penalty kicks, the visitors began to lay siege to the Cowbridge line, scoring two converted tries to reduce the margin to only five points.

Cowbridge continued to concede penalties in the second half and it came as no surprise when Bridgend scored an unconverted try to level the scores.

The final five minutes were played in bad spirit as the home team players became more and more frustrated with the continuing number of penalties being inflicted on them, which resulted in a red card for a Cowbridge player.

Bridgend took advantage of playing against 14 men to score the final try, winning the game 26-19.

Prominent for Cowbridge in the backs were Joe Nott, Seán Davies and Charlie Pegrum, with Will Couzins, Matthew Keating and Duncan Ace the pick of the forwards.

AD

CANOE TEST

A NON-STOP 125 mile canoe race with 77 portages is not the most relaxing way to spend Easter weekend – but then Vale adventure athlete Maria Leijerstam doesn't believe in an easy life.

Maria and race partner Neal Fletcher, past chairman of Cardiff Canoe Club, are taking part in the Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race over the Easter weekend, where they are aiming for a place in the top three in their category.

The race is a severe test of skill and stamina as to negotiate the locks they will have to get out of their boat a total of 77 times and carry it for up to a mile at a time.

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YEAR-11 PUPILS SHINE IN COUNTY NETBALL FINALS

Year 7 netball team.

THE year 11 netball team played in the county netball finals held at Talybont on Monday, March 11.

The top four teams in Cardiff and the Vale qualified for the finals back in December and as a result Cowbridge faced tough competition from Corpus Christi, Stanwell and St. Teilo's.

We played Stanwell first and got off to an outstanding start with Jo Wilkins at GA and Lydia Hitchings at GS unstoppable in the shooting circle. The girls went from strength to strength throughout the second half and secured a resounding 18-11 win at full time.

In the second match Cowbridge played reigning county champions Corpus Christi, whose year 11 team had won the title for the last four consecutive years.

Despite initial nerves, Cowbridge came out defiant and battled ahead to a 3-0 lead off the first three centre passes.

The Corpus Christi team were shocked and needed to respond quickly to keep themselves in the game. They did just that and clawed back to 3-3.

Solid defense from Sarah Lewis and GK and Olivia Brown at GD, despite hurting her thumb during the game, ensured that Cowbridge could hang on to the 6-5 lead at half time.

In the second half the match was goal for goal with Kim Jerwood at WD, Annabel Curle at C and Megan McNamee at WA working tirelessly to turn the ball over in centre court and feed the circle.

With one minute to go the score was 10-10, but in the closing passage of play the experience of the Corpus team shone through and they edged ahead to take a 12-10 win on the final whistle.

The Cowbridge team were deflated, but should be extremely proud of their performance, grit and determination throughout; an outstanding team performance.

In the final game Cowbridge played St. Teilo's in another hard fought battle which matched the intensity of the Corpus Christi game and followed a goal for goal pattern throughout.

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Oliver Hitchings.

Both teams played with flair and precision and it was a lovely match to watch. Again in the later stages of the game the score was tied, but it was St. Teilo's who took the edge in the closing minutes to win 14-11.

Cowbridge had played three games on the trot and despite an extremely gutsy effort, they were exhausted!

As a result, the county finals ended with Cowbridge finishing third, but we had only lost by two goals to the county champions – a testament to the high level of competition; well done to all the girls!

The year 7 Vale Netball Championships was hosted at Cowbridge on Wednesday, March 13.

The tournament was very well attended by the Vale schools and contested between Cowbridge, Llantwit, Stanwell, Bro Morgannwg, Bryn Hafren and St. Richard Gwyn.

Due to time constraints on our community facilities and 15 matches needing to be played, each match was nine minutes one way, with rolling subs permitted at centre passes or breaks in play.

After an outstandingly successful season, Cowbridge stormed ahead on the scoreboard and produced the following match winning performances to secure the title:

Beat Llantwit 8-0; beat Stanwell 7-0; beat St. Richard Gwyn 3-0; beat Bryn Hafren (they had to leave early so conceded); beat Bro Morgannwg 5-1.

Well done to all the year 7 girls who have trained consistently throughout the season, demonstrating their great commitment to school sport.

As a result of this we went to watch the Celtic Dragons netball team in action to celebrate!

Team: Sophie Rees, Jordan Meek, Olivia Mitchell, Emily Jenkins, Meriel Clode, Mali Howell, Tirion Evans, Sarah Jones, Elin Swallow, Megan Hodgson – who was unfortunately ill so unable to play in the final tournament.

Player of the match: Sophie Rees.

RUGBY

Congratulations to Oliver Hitchings after an outstanding rugby season that culminated with two caps for Wales' under- 18s.

Oliver played a full part in the 29-27 win over France at St Helens and he also came off the bench in the defeat to England.

With some outstanding performances, Oliver has really caught the eye of Cardiff Blues director of rugby Phil Davies, who is looking at the possibility of getting Oliver out to France to gain some invaluable experience for next season.

Good luck Oli and congratulations.

JUNIOR RUGBY ROUND-UP

Under-10s fight the cold against Pentyrch

SUB-ZERO temperatures and razor sharp biting winds increased the pain of a tough battle against old Cowbridge adversaries Pentyrch on Sunday.

Cowbridge under-10s took two teams to the away fixture, where the bitter hilltop winds made the Vale's cold snap seem like tropical climes.

The first game was fought hard by Aled Leitch, Iwan-Thomas Bartle, Jake Williams, Harri Howkins, Harry Whittaker, Oliver Jarmaine, Jack Reilly, Ioan Davies, Charlie Locke and David Harris.

Quick hands and hard tackling was the name of the game. Several Cowbridge attacks were defended strongly by Pentyrch, with Charlie Locke and Jake Williams both denied tries from startling breaks by committed Pentyrch tackling.

Pentyrch scored first, quickly followed by a Cowbridge equalizer from a heroic 15 yard drive by Aled Leitch, dragging black shirted bodies behind him.

A second try by Pentyrch from a clever interception called for Cowbridge to dig deep as spectators forgot their freezing fingers to vocally encourage the open play.

Cowbridge attacked hard with structured and disciplined phase play, leading to Ioan Davies cleverly drawing his man before a stunning pass to set up a Jake Williams equalising try.

Gruff Ford replaced Charlie Locke in the second half after a tackle left Locke gripping his ribs on the touchline. Pentyrch seized a last minute try to take the game 3-2.

The second match was taken on by Harry Crane, Joe Marshman, James Gilvear, Matthew Gilvear, Tom Pugh, Robbie Hawkins, Elisedd Greenwood, together with re-appearances from Gruff Ford, David Harris and Iwan-Thomas Bartle.

Some expansive and encouraging attacking play from the Cowbridge side was met by strong Pentyrch forward play, and possession was more than often the name of the game.

Marshman, Crane, Bartle and James Gilvear showed glimpses of brilliance but unfortunately Pentyrch were the stronger side and some Cowbridge missed tackles in the latter stages of the game, as the freezing conditions started to impact on performance, put our Arctic heroes on the back foot by the time of the final whistle.

An unrepresentative run of Pentyrch tries during the last few minutes of the game produced a score that regretfully didn't reflect the game or the quality of play. Final score 8-0 to Pentyrch.

WL

On a freezing cold day on the open fields of Pentyrch, the under-9s put in a fine effort against a very good Pentyrch side before narrowly falling to defeat.

With a cold wind blowing across the pitch the conditions were difficult but both sides scored some excellent tries to almost warm the spectators cheering on the side.

The first quarter proved to be a tight affair with excellent tries being scored for Cowbridge by Harry Treharne and Ruben Davies. Pentyrch replied with two of their own the leave the match all square.

Quarter 2 was a ding dong battle which Pentyrch finally edge 5-4. For Cowbridge, Finlay Brace scored two fine tries and Robbie Brown used his power to crash over for two tries.

Quarter 3 saw Pentyrch take a decisive edge in the match. The cold conditions were finally taking the toll as a few passes started going to ground and Cowbridge struggled in this quarter.

The only reward for Cowbridge was a Robbie Brown try but Pentyrch crossed the whitewash three times to leave the match score 10 -7 to the home side.

Quarter 4 saw some warmer bodies return to the field and a total of 9 tries were scored with Pentyrch edging it 5-4 to leave the final match score 15-11 in favour of Pentyrch.

Will Ryan added two tries and two excellent long range efforts from Finlay Sullivan rounded off a very entertaining match

On a cold day when hats and gloves were the order of the day there were good defensive efforts from Will Ryan, Robbie Brown, Finlay Brace and Ethan Francis.

The game was a credit to both sides and the coaches were delighted with the effort put in by the boys. Hopefully, spring will have arrived by this week.

Squad: Harry Treharne, Ruben Davies, Will Ryan, Ollie Jones, Will Harris, Ethan Francis, Lewys Robins, Ifor Rees, Rhys Pritchard, Iolo Davies, Tom Collingbridge, Finlay Brace, Finlay Sullivan, Finlay Ball, Robbie Brown, Tom Brennan.

MF

Cowbridge under-7s travelled to Pentyrch and put on a good display of attacking rugby despite the freezing temperatures and a shortage of players.

Team 1's first game was an evenly matched affair with Cowbridge responding each time Pentyrch scored a try.

Joe Davies scored an impressive first half hat trick thanks to his speedy running.

A clever pass from James Collingridge led to Ioan Phillips driving through to score. More solid teamwork led to James C putting the ball over the line and the game was concluded with another try from Joe who weaved through the defence to score. Final score 6-6.

Team 1's second match began with a try from Joe Arentsen who demonstrated a lovely sidestep. Pentyrch responded and the pattern of the first match continued.

Joe D added two more to his tally and Ioan scored twice including a powerful run from a restart. The scores were even but Cowbridge claimed victory in the final minutes, with Joe D claiming his seventh try thanks to an excellent run from Will Brennan who was tagged just short of the line, and good team passing enabled James C to drive through and score. Final score 7-5 to Cowbridge.

Both of Team 2's matches followed a similar pattern with Cowbridge playing catch up after good starts by Pentyrch.

The biggest cheer of the match came when Mabli Davies opened her try scoring account with a superb run.

James Lord also scored a hat trick, demonstrating his ability to cut through the gaps in defence with his pace, and Henry Pugh drove over the line, but it was not enough as Cowbridge lost the game 7-5.

In the second game James L continued to mercilessly harangue the Pentyrch defence and scored a further four good tries and Henry Pugh also added to his tally.

Joe Funtek and Sam Jackson proved to be adept at tagging despite the bitter cold, but Pentrych were able to maintain their early lead and Cowbridge lost the game 7-5.

KD

COWBRIDGE DARTS ROUND-UP

ON Tuesday, March 19, the Clive Blick trophy was completed.

This year's champions are Mo Fleming, Rob Jones and Nigel Thomas (Farmers Arms) who defeated Pam Rosser, Mark Dowling and Jason Cooke (Carne Arms) 3-1 in the final.

Present league standings: Edmondes B (84 points), Llanharry (82), Edmondes A (68), Hare and Hounds (60), White Lion (51), Farmers Arms (49), Carne Arms (48), Highwayman Inn (40), Cross Inn (39), Old Post Ladies (37). On April 2, the league takes an Easter break, returning with a full league fixture on April 9.

Interested in playing darts next season? Most teams are always on the lookout for new players and the league is keen to expand the number of teams playing next season.

If a group of you is interested in forming a team (six players is the minimum number required) and your local pub is willing to host you please get in touch with the league (e-mail: cowbridgedarts@googlemail.com) and register your interest.

Up-to-date information on upcoming matches, league results and the league table can be found on the website: www.darts.apsn.co.uk.

PT